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good Lord Cobham

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THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
THE GOOD LORD COBHAM.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY HENRY RICHARDS,
BRYDGES-STREET.

W
Sir John Oldcastle, styled Lord
Cobham

THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

THE GOOD LORD COBHAM.

✓
BY THOMAS GASPEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE LOLLARDS," ETC. ETC.

✧

"As his body was hanged and burnt in an unusual posture at Tyburne, so his memory hath ever since been in a strange suspense between malefactor and martyr; Papists charging him with treason against King Henry the Fifth, and heading an army of more than ten thousand men, though it wanted nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine thereof, so far as it appears solidly proved."--Fuller's "Worthies of England."

"Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, was a man whose virtues made him a reformer, whose valour made him a martyr."--Horace Walpole.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

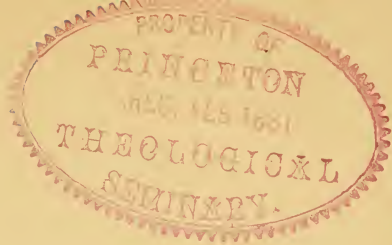
VOL. II.

LONDON :

CUNNINGHAM AND MORTIMER, ADELAIDE-STREET,
TRAFALGAR-SQUARE.

1843.





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1. APPOINTED by the favour of his sovereign, and fortified by the sanction of the pope, Chichely now felt himself secure. His authority established, he came to the resolution of proceeding, in a determined spirit, against those objects of incessant persecution—those reputed foes to the church—called “Lollards.” Stern and determined as his predecessor, he was more formidable, as he had credit for greater abilities, and had more command of temper. Though he had courted the occupant of the papal chair to get his own power confirmed, one of his first acts was against the jurisdiction of the pope.

A council was held in London to disannul the privilege, which had been granted to certain monasteries, of exception from episcopal control. Whether this, which Walsingham calls "a rancorous proceeding," was moved and carried at that time does not appear; but another decision was come to shortly afterwards, still more fatal to the authority of John the Twenty-third.

The lovers of military renown may contend that England owes a lasting debt of gratitude to Archbishop Chichely. If a fearful waste of human life—if a series of brilliant but useless conquests be desirable, it may with no small reason be maintained, that to him we should ascribe the deathless fame of Henry the Fifth, and all the glories of Agincourt.

2. To engage the king in an enterprise suitable to his bold and aspiring nature, to guard against his being unduly moved by the groans of his subjects, and to make the nation forget the tyranny of priests at home, while their triumphant arms spread terror and dismay abroad, the cunning and eloquence of Chichely were successfully employed. He urged the warlike monarch, in animated language, to revive the claim of Edward the Third to the crown of France. "Since," said he, "in the House of Lords, I owe all my power to your favour, gratitude, as well as duty, compels me to

propound what I think may promote the honour of so gracious a sovereign. You," he continued, "administer justice to your people with a noble equity—you are illustrious in the arts of a peaceful government; but the glory of a great king consists not so much in a reign of serenity and plenty, as in the enlargement of his dominions, especially where the assertion of his rights calls him out to war, and justice, not ambition, authorises conquest. Your majesty ought to wear the crown of France, of right descending to you from your illustrious predecessor Edward the Third. That valiant king openly challenged his right by ambassadors; and when the French endeavoured to elude it, by a pretended Salic law, he bravely applied himself to gain by arms what he could not obtain by treaty. You have the same right to demand the crown, and the same right to make war on a refusal." He then proceeded to expose the fallacy of the plea, that the Salic law was made by Pharamond, the founder of the monarchy, contending that it had no name or being till four centuries after that monarch's death, when, Charlemagne returning from the conquest of the Saxons, part of his army, passing the Sala, seated themselves between that river and the Elbe, and from the name of the former were called the Salic Gauls. That colony, detesting the manners

of the German women, made a law that none of that sex should inherit lands within the bounds of their little government. "But what," he demanded, "is that to France? How will the French persuade us that by virtue of that law the crown must not descend to the daughter of any of their kings, if they do not first prove their country to be situate between those two German rivers?" Pursuing this course of argument, he went on to say that the French alone violated the statutes of Heaven, in denying that the crown of right descended from Isabella, King Henry's great grandmother, to him; and, in conclusion, he added that to recover it the clergy had granted him such a sum as had never been placed at the disposal of his predecessors; besides the customary further aid of their prayers for the success of his arms.

Though opposed by the Earl of Westmoreland, Chichely's eloquence prevailed. The king and his brothers, eager for glory and impatient to signalize themselves in fight, favoured the views of this "minister of peace," and war was declared.

It is not necessary here to follow Henry through the stormy scenes which succeeded. The invasion of France, the failure and distress of the English, and their final triumph, are among the historical events most familiarly known to every reader.

3. We turn to other matters, and now a scene, most memorable and sad, opens before us. The opinions of Wickliffe, which Lord Cobham had so resolutely espoused, had found their way into various countries; and he had corresponded with the celebrated Bohemian, John Huss, who defended the faith he avowed, and propagated it with all the courage and constancy of his friend. His influence, joined to that of Cobham, gave circulation to Wickliffe's opinions in Bohemia, France, Spain, and Germany. The anxiety of Huss that truth should prevail was gratified by the English reformer, who had many copies made of Wickliffe's works for foreign circulation. We shall see that, powerful as the enemies of Cobham had proved, if possible, a still more fearful phalanx was arrayed against Huss, which, not content with the mighty force they possessed, did not scruple to employ for his destruction the meanest artifice and the most heartless fraud. This was done, not by the malice of a single man, or a single nation, but by eminent dignitaries, representing the Christian States, and with the sanction of monarchs, where all that was great and singularly pious in Christendom was supposed to be congregated to regulate the affairs of the Catholic Church, and to declare to the whole world what was most agreeable to God. Such was the tribunal before which the Bohemian

was content to appear, and by whose inhuman decree he was eventually to fall.

4. The Council of Constance presents one of those scenes which painfully remind the reflecting reader of the weakness of man. We see in it the illustrious by birth, the exalted in station, the eminent for learning, and, above all, the famed for sanctity, labouring, through many wearisome days, to exhibit to the world at last a mass of folly hardly equalled in the history of the species,—of folly, rendered more hateful by bloodthirsty wrath, where, had but the shadow of right been on their side, pity ought to have prevailed. Added to that, we behold impotent vengeance, pursuing in the grave the mouldering remains of the honoured dead.

To repeat all that is recorded of the Council of Constance, would be to produce a ponderous volume which would interest few save churchmen; but not to glance at it slightly, would be to withhold requisite information, bearing on the great cause in which Cobham had embarked. It will be attempted to present a general view of what was proposed and done, avoiding the prolixity of the old histories, but giving copious details of the most curious and affecting incidents.

The great object in assembling this celebrated council, was to decide which of three pretenders to the papal chair should be regarded as the true pope.

John the Twenty-third, it has been seen, had been recognised by England, on the occasion of Chicheley being installed in the see of Canterbury. Pedro de Luna, or Benedict the Thirteenth, however, and Angeli Corario, or Gregory the Twelfth, were both living, and both determined on persevering in their claims to supreme authority in the Christian world.

5. The opinions of Wickliffe had made great progress in Bohemia at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The Queen of Richard the Second, returning to her native country after the death of that monarch, with her attendants, young as she was, is believed to have carried with her the religious principles of the English reformer. There they were welcomed by many of the Bohemian nobles, and soon became popular from the eloquence and power with which they were advocated by John Huss. His blameless life and unquestionable piety gave him prodigious influence among his countrymen, and his course through many years was well fitted to render illustrious the career of a saint or a martyr. In 1401 he was appointed President of the faculty of Philosophy, in the University of Prague. The year before, he had been named confessor to Sophia of Bavaria, Queen of Bohemia. His celebrity increased, and, a wealthy citizen having built and endowed a chapel at Prague, which was called "Bethlehem,"

his preachings there drew together large congregations, before whom his growing zeal against the frauds and exactions of the Roman Catholic Church was manifested from time to time. His sermons denouncing crusades, indulgences, and excommunications, suited the spirit of the times. They were listened to with breathless reverential attention, and often received with transports of applause, such as have not in later times been permitted to be manifested in places of worship.

He pursued this course for a considerable period, without encountering any censure or obstruction. Subinco, the Archbishop of Prague, was negligent or indulgent, and reported in 1408 that the kingdom under his superintendence was, in matters of doctrine, wholly free from blemish.

A fierce contest arose in the university, and the part which the patriotism of Huss led him to take in it, at once fixed upon him the attention of the pope. The German students had been allowed a greater share in the government of that seminary of learning, than the Bohemians thought ought to be trusted in their hands. Huss joined with the latter, in claiming for them those dignities and emoluments which the Germans had enjoyed. An appeal was made to the king, and he, influenced, as it was believed, by the eloquence and zeal of John Huss, decided in favour of the Bohemians.

6. The disturbed state of the Roman Church at that period was extremely perplexing to all who desired to be good Catholics. Nothing could be more fierce than the struggles of contending parties for the papal seat. Huss opposed Gregory the Twelfth, and this caused a decree to be issued against the followers of the Bohemian divine. In 1411 John the Twenty-third caused a crusade to be preached against Ladislaus King of Naples. This formidable step was sternly opposed by Huss. From his pulpit he declared that it was profane mockery of a holy symbol, to parade the cross in a cause so unhallowed. The impression made by discourses of this description was such, that the enthusiasm of some of his hearers broke out in furious and menacing exclamations. By order of the senate three of the offenders were seized, and privately put to death. But the foul act could not be concealed, and the exasperated populace, now spurning all control, rose *en masse*, and, bursting the prison-doors, seized the bodies of their slaughtered fellows, and carried them in mournful triumph to the several churches in the city, chanting a requiem in honour of the departed, on their way. Finally, they buried them in Bethlehem chapel, the scene of John Huss's ministerial labours. The victims were no longer seen, but their fate was not forgotten, and many disturbances

occurred of which religion, or differences which arose in its name, were the cause.

7. Balthazar Cossa, under the title of John the Twenty-third, as already mentioned, then filled the papal chair, and exercised the authority of pope. He was recognised by many bishops of different Christian countries; Pedro de Luna and Angeli Corario had severally their adherents, but their numbers and influence were not equal to those who favoured John. However questionable their claim might be, the same horrid catalogue of crimes was not charged against either which were said to disqualify him. From the deliberations of the council John the Twenty-third had little to hope, but his power was already so shaken, that he saw it would be impossible to prevent the inquiry he dreaded, and, therefore, deemed it policy to sanction, with apparent good will, what he could not avoid. He, however, evinced some misgivings as to the treatment he might personally receive, which prove that he knew right well the character of those with whom he had to treat. He at first resolved never to trust himself in any place which was under the control of the Emperor Sigismund, but subsequently gave way, and soon repented that he had done so. The result was, that he consented, on the representations of the emperor, to summon a general council at Constance. Besides the safe-

conduct granted to others, he stipulated that the syndics and magistrates of Constance should bind themselves by oath to receive him with all the honours rendered to the popes his predecessors; to guarantee that he should have the full exercise of his authority, and be permitted to come and go at his pleasure unmolested.

The council met in the great church at Constance, in November, 1414, and created a most extraordinary sensation throughout Europe. We read with amazement the accounts which have come down to us of the multitudes that were present. Fox thus enumerates them :—

“ Prelates assembled in council—three thousand nine hundred and forty, of which three hundred and forty-six were archbishops and bishops.

“ Secular men, including princes, dukes, earls, knights, and esquires,—sixteen thousand.

“ Besides common women belonging to the same council, four hundred and fifty.

“ Six hundred barbers, and three hundred and twenty minstrels, cooks, and jesters.” The total number of strangers brought together in that city at one period, was calculated to amount to no fewer than sixty thousand five hundred persons.

8. Though to settle the claims of the candidates for the papal chair, was really, as well as ostensibly, the cause of the council being assembled, those who

met there were most anxious to avail themselves of its sanction to crush that doctrine which Wickliffe had promulgated, and which Lord Cobham had never ceased to advocate. The fame which John Huss had gained in Bohemia, his native land, caused the spread of "Wickliffe learning" to be rapid, and the impression made by the solemn truths which he preached was most striking and profound. Before the council had opened its sessions, measures were taken for calling upon Huss to appear before it. The Emperor Sigismund sent to him, requiring him to attend at Constance to clear himself of certain errors imputed to him. Huss had no wish to shrink from the defence of those opinions which it was his greatest glory, as he thought it was his most sacred duty, to avow. He was encouraged to believe that in doing so he ran no personal risk, as, before setting out, he received a safe-conduct from Sigismund, which appeared so full and so satisfactory, that he must have been more than ordinarily suspicious, could he have imagined that it covered any latent design against his life and liberty. It ran thus:—

9. "Sigismund, by the grace of God King of the Romans, of Hungary and Denmark, Croatia, &c.

"To all princes, ecclesiastical and secular, dukes, marquesses, earls, barons, captains, boroughmasters,

judges, and governors, and unto all rulers of the commonality, and generally to all the subjects of our empire to whom these letters shall come, grace and goodness.

“ We charge and command you all, that you have respect unto John Huss, who is departed out of Bohemia to come to the general council, which shall be celebrated and held in the city of Constance. The said John Huss we have received under our protection and safeguard of the whole empire; desiring you that you will cheerfully receive him when he shall come toward you, and that you entreat and handle him gently; showing him favour and good will, and pleasuring him in all things, as touching the forwardness, ease, and assurance of his journey, as well by land as by water. Moreover, we will that he and all his company, with his carriage and necessaries, shall pass through all places, passages, ports, bridges, lands, governances, lordships, liberties, cities, towns, burgages, castles, and villages, and all other your dominions, without paying any manner of imposition or Dane money, peage tribute, or any other description of toll whatever.

“ We will, also, that you suffer him to pass, rest, tarry, and to sojourn at liberty, without doing unto him any manner of impeachment, or vexation, or trouble; and that, if need shall so require, you do

provide a faithful company to conduct him withal, for the honour and reverence which you owe unto our imperial majesty. Given at Spire, the 18th October, in the year of our Lord God, 1414.”

A document like this, manifesting such care for his person, and even kindly anxiety to spare him expense, was well calculated to inspire the Bohemian with confidence in the benevolent disposition of the emperor. Huss, though malignantly assailed in his own country, had defied the slanderers to come forward as public accusers, and they had feared to take up the gauntlet which he boldly threw down. This bred in his mind a conviction, that to brave danger was the readiest way to triumph over it; and, strong in the goodness of his cause, as well as in the promised support of many Bohemian nobles and other powerful friends, he looked forward to the result of his appearing before the council, as one that would be honourable to himself, and in a high degree serviceable to that faith in which it was his firm resolution to live and die.

He was, in fact, proud of the opportunity about to be afforded of vindicating the truths he had taught. Though he frequently expressed himself willing to lay down his life in the cause, he could not rationally apprehend that his constancy was likely to be put to a test so awfully severe, by his

journey to Constance. He was anxious to give every publicity to his intentions. Ardent in the cause, and conscious of his powers, he openly invited all who had anything to charge against him to come forward there. In various parts of the city of Prague, before setting out, he caused the following notice to be posted:—

“ Master John Huss, Bachelor of Divinity, will appear before the most reverend father the Lord Conrad, Archbishop of Prague, and Legate of the Apostolic seat, in the next convocation of all the prelates and clergy of the kingdom of Bohemia; being ready always to satisfy all men who shall require him to give a reason for the faith and hope that he holdeth; and to hear and see all such as will lay to his charge either any stubbornness of error or heresy, that they should write in their names there, as is required both by God’s laws and man’s. And if they cannot lawfully prove any stubbornness of error or heresy against him, that then they should suffer the like punishment which he should have endured, unto whom, altogether, he will elsewhere, at the next general council at Constance, before the archbishop and the prelates, and according to the decrees and canons of the holy fathers, show forth his innocence in the name of Christ. Dated the Sunday next after the feast of St. Bartholomew.”

Huss was the more emboldened to take this course, from the circumstance of his having already so far succeeded in vindicating his conduct before the Bishop of Nazareth, who was appointed to inquire into his alleged heresies, as to obtain from him a declaration, bearing date August 13th, 1414, that he had appeared to meet any one who was prepared to call his opinions in question, which challenge had not been answered. He endeavoured to go farther. The barons of Bohemia assembled in the abbey of St. James. John Huss petitioned that, if the archbishop suspected him of holding any heretical opinions, he should declare the same openly. The archbishop replied that he did not know that Huss was in any respect culpable, and had only to commend to him that he should answer what had been urged against him elsewhere.

A meeting of the prelates and clergy was held at the archbishop's court, and thither Huss resolved upon sending a doctor of decretals and procurer, John Jesenitz, requiring that he might be heard as counsel for him, or that Huss might appear in person. This was peremptorily refused. A protest, duly witnessed on the occasion, was entered on his behalf. He attached great importance to providing himself with evidence to show that he had, on every occasion, invited the most searching inquiry into the faith that he held.

10. If such were the hopes by which he was sustained and cheered before the commencement of his expedition, they were nothing abated as he proceeded on his way. He was hailed by many of his countrymen as one who had exerted superior talents in a righteous cause; but it was not till he entered Germany that he learned how much greater his fame was in foreign parts. In every city multitudes came forth to greet him. His acknowledged learning, his blameless life, and his dauntless courage, were the themes of universal admiration. If this cordial greeting flattered and gratified the man, truly soothing and delightful must it have been to the heart of the minister. He had believed himself the chosen instrument of Heaven to open the eyes of his fellow-creatures, and to lead them into the right path. His heart naturally expanded with the purest delight, when he saw, from the vast, affectionate, and reverential excitement which prevailed, how important his labours were likely to prove; and sincerely must he have felt with the apostle, that "to die in such a cause would to him be gain."

Could the Bohemian be suspected of vanity, the veneration and applause which everywhere marked his advance would have gratified the most arrogant of men. His calm and benign spirit looked higher, and enjoyed a more than worldly triumph, while

the countless thousands who united to honour him, rendered it next to impossible for him to suspect that any council or body of opposing churchmen should place his life in jeopardy.

Though the whole of his subsequent conduct proves he was not a man to shrink from peril where his principles were concerned, he could not suspect, when he left that home to which he was never to return, that so fearful a trial was reserved for him.

CHAPTER XVI.

CHARGES AGAINST JOHN HUSS.

1. Huss challenges all his enemies to meet him at Constance.—2. He is courteously received by the pope.—3. Stephen Palletz and Michael de Causis.—4. Huss appears before the cardinals.—5. Huss is made prisoner.—6. He is confined in a castle and put in irons.—7. The Bohemian nobles interfere in his behalf.—8. Huss prepares for his trial.

1. IN a happy frame of mind, in a glow of sacred joy, confiding in God, and not afraid of man, the Bohemian advanced towards Constance. He felt that the momentous duty which devolved upon him to vindicate the truth, would be but imperfectly performed, if he did not repeat the challenge which he had given at Prague, in all the cities through which he passed; and, accordingly, the following paper was exhibited, by his directions, in each of them:—

“ Master John Huss goeth now to Constance, there to declare his faith, which he hath hitherto held, and even at this present doth hold, and, by

God's help, will defend and keep, even unto death. Therefore, even as he hath manifested throughout all the kingdom of Bohemia by his letters and intimation, willing before his departure to have satisfied and given an account of his faith unto every man which should object or lay anything against him in the general convocation holden in the Archbishop of Prague's court, likewise he doth manifest and signify, that, if there be any man in this noble and imperial city, the which will impute or lay any errors unto him, that he should prepare himself to come to the council, forasmuch as the said John Huss is ready to satisfy every man at the said council, who shall lay anything unto his charge touching his faith."

At Nuremberg, certain merchants, who had passed him on the road, announced his coming, and, in consequence, he was received with extraordinary honours. Many curates of that city were desirous of conversing with him confidentially in private, but this he thought it for his credit to decline. He wished, he said, to proclaim openly his opinions before all men, and would hear of no concealment. To those who thronged to hear him, he made a long discourse, in the after-part of the day, which was listened to with equal attention and delight. A Charterhouse monk, the curate of St. Sibald, seems to have been the single exception—the only

one who disapproved of anything that he advanced. Upon the whole, his progress from Prague to Constance was more like that of a victor king, triumphantly returning to his capital, than the approach of a martyr to the stake.

2. Three weeks were thus consumed. On the twentieth day after his departure from Prague, he reached the place of his destination. Arrived in Constance, he took up his abode in the house of a respectable widow, named Faith, in St. Gallstreet. On the following day, the Baron de Chlume, a Bohemian nobleman, and one Henry Latzen, went to the pope, and reported to him what probably he had not then to learn,—that Huss had arrived in Constance under the safe-conduct of the emperor. They now requested that his holiness would give the document his sanction, and consent that their friend should be permitted to remain in the city without vexation or interruption. John received them with much courtesy and apparent good will, and declared that, if Huss had been the murderer of his brother, he would not have refused compliance with their wish. He assured them that, so far as depended upon him, no outrage should be offered while it was his pleasure to remain there.

3. Among those most active in slandering Huss was Stephen Palletz, a man who had known him

from youth, and in whom envy of his well-earned renown had probably engendered malice. This person, with a companion named Stanislaus Zuoma, left Prague about the time of John's departure. They had scarcely passed the limits of Bohemia, when Zuoma fell sick of an imposthume and died. The loss of his companion did not work repentance in the heart of Palletz; and his fierce hatred led him to join against the friend of other days, with Michael de Causis, a ruined speculator, who had formerly been in the church, but who, having represented that he had discovered the means of profitably working certain gold-mines which had been abandoned, induced King Wincellaus to advance a large sum for that purpose, which, however, led not to the desired result. When the money intrusted to his keeping began to fail, De Causis thought it right to take care of himself, (like more than one mining speculator of recent date,) without regard to the interests of others, and, with what remained in his hands, he fled from Bohemia. This man now thought he might profit from the disposition which existed in certain quarters to ruin John Huss, and with that view entered into a sort of partnership with Palletz, to get up new accusations against the brave and unsuspecting reformer. The confederates contrived to intimate to the cardinals and others, who were most

disposed to act with severity, that he had been guilty of greater crimes than had, up to that moment, been suspected. The information was greedily received ; and it was resolved to find some excuse to apprehend the Bohemian suddenly, lest, apprised of what was in contemplation, he should attempt to save himself by retracing his steps.

Wholly unsuspecting the deadly malice which was moving against him, Huss cheerfully awaited the coming of the time when he might defend his conduct, before that great assembly before which he was soon to appear. He enjoyed the society of his friends, but was daily occupied in reading and writing, to prepare himself for the due performance of the task which he felt was, in its immediate result and future consequences, of the last importance to the whole Christian world.

4. Twenty-six days he had been resident in Constance, when he was, somewhat unexpectedly, waited upon at his lodgings by the Bishops of Trident and Augusta. They were accompanied by the Burgomaster of Constance, and another, and came about dinner-time. In their manner there was nothing hostile, but they announced that the Pope and his cardinals were willing to see him, that he might give them some account of his doctrines and opinions, which he had declared himself anxious to render.

Little did he imagine that he was at that moment actually surrounded by armed men, who were determined, forthwith, to make him a prisoner. That his visitors had any object in coming, beyond what they avowed, he had not the remotest idea. To their address he mildly replied, that he had never desired particularly to vindicate his opinions before the Pope and his cardinals. Trusting in the Lord Jesus, he would, without fear or doubt, defend what he had thought it right to teach, before the great council then about to sit. This he was anxious to do openly, in the view of all the world; yet, moved by their courteous bearing, since the Pope and cardinals required him to appear, he would not refuse to go. He then ordered his horse, which he had put up at his lodgings, and immediately proceeded to the court of the Pope.

There he was informed, by those who had desired his presence, that he had fallen into many errors, which, for a long space of time, he had been teaching through the whole realm of Bohemia. They had on that account wished to examine him on certain points, to ascertain precisely how the case stood.

His answer was manly but conciliating.—

“Reverend fathers,” said he, “I would much rather die than be proved guilty of one error. I trust that it will never be found that I have fallen

into many. I have been the more willing to appear before the council here to be held, because I desire to show my readiness to retract any error that can be proved against me."

The cardinals declared themselves agreeably surprised at hearing language like this. They then withdrew to consider of the course fittest to be pursued, leaving Huss encompassed by their emissaries, who were instructed to watch him closely. While they were absent, a Franciscan friar, named Didace, affecting much simplicity and ignorance, begged to ask him questions touching the real presence in the sacrament. His aim was to draw from Huss admissions which might be used against him. The penetration of the Bohemian was not easily to be imposed upon. He avoided the snare, and denied that he held the opinions said to have been his. Defeated in his first attempt, the friar returned to the charge, which he repeated by his queries a second, and even a third, time, when the Baron de Chlume, the faithful friend of Huss, who was by, schooled him sharply for his importunity. The friar then put another question, having for its object to gain from Huss a declaration of what he had taught, as to the unity of God and man in the person of Christ. The imposture was now completely exposed. That such a question could be propounded by a simple and ignorant person, as

Didace had described himself to be, was more than Huss could for a moment credit, and so he frankly told the catechist; but, at the same time, he declared that he had no objection to state what was his belief. This done, the monk expressed many thanks for the information he had received, and took his leave. Then it was Huss was apprised of his true quality, and told that he was the most subtle divine in all Lombardy. The Bohemian regretted that he had not learned it sooner, as, in that case, he would have replied to Didace in a different tone.

5. Awaiting the cardinals' pleasure, Huss, and his friend the baron, found themselves in the midst of armed soldiers. They remained in the court till four o'clock in the afternoon, when the cardinals returned. Stephen Palletz and Michael de Causis then appeared, with others who favoured their views, and called upon the court not to suffer Huss to go at liberty. The reasons they urged for acting at that moment with such severity have not come down to us, but their application prevailed. Palletz and his companion, upon this, indulged in much indecent exultation, and scornfully told the prisoner that, now they had him in their power, they would take care to make him pay for all his past doings. The baron was likewise detained in custody till night, when the provost of the

court was sent to announce to him that he might return to his lodgings. Though not sorry to be released himself, he was indignant at the base treatment to which his friend was subjected. He lost no time in seeking the Pope, to whom he complained with bitterness, well justified by the occasion, of the course which had been pursued; at the same time reminding him of the solemn promise which he had given when Huss first arrived in the city. John replied that the step taken had not had his consent, and he himself was completely in the power of his cardinals and bishops. Whether he spoke truth, so far as Huss was concerned, has been doubted. Looking at his infamous character, there is nothing in cruelty or in falsehood to which John the Twenty-third may not be presumed to have been equal; but, at the same time, it must be admitted that his vices, and, generally, the course of events in his then circumstances, had, in a great measure, withdrawn from him all the power and authority belonging to the high office which his name continued to degrade.

6. The efforts of the Baron de Chlume, to open the prison of Huss, were ineffectual. For eight days he was confined in the Chapter-house of the great church of Constance. Thence he was removed to the Jacobins' convent, and secured in the prison of the abbey. Here he was attacked by an

ague, caused by the stench and dampness of his dungeon. His health so far declined that his enemies feared they would lose an opportunity of shedding blood, through his premature death. In this state of things, those who held his fate in their hands thought no time was to be lost in getting up a case against him, and articles were forthwith drawn up, which were to the following effect:—

“That he had erred in regard to the sacrament, maintaining that it ought to be administered to the people under both kinds—that is to say, the body and blood; and, also, in holding that, after the words of consecration, material bread remained.

“Secondly, in holding that members of the church cannot consecrate or administer sacraments, being in a state of mortal sin, while every man, not being a priest or a minister of religion, without sin, had the power to do so.

“Thirdly, in not admitting that the holy church of Christ meant the Pope, cardinals, and bishops; and further, in teaching that the church ought not to have any temporal possessions, and that such possessions might be taken away by temporal lords. Through these doctrines and enticements, many churches in the kingdom of Bohemia had been already despoiled of a great part of their temporalities and goods.

“ Fourthly, in holding that all priests are of like power.

“ Fifthly, that the church hath no power over the keys; the Pope, cardinals, and other priests being in deadly sin.

“ Sixthly, that, through contempt, he did not fear excommunication; and, being excommunicated, had profaned the church by saying mass.

“ Seventhly, that he was of opinion that every man had authority to invest and appoint any other man to the cure of souls.

“ Eighthly, that a man once ordained as a priest could not afterwards be forbidden or kept back from preaching.”

It was added to the last article that—

“ John Huss, having been in sheep’s clothing a raving wolf, had propagated errors which had caused the university of Prague to be deserted; and that, when the divines of that seat of learning had declared the opinions of Wickliffe to be heretical, he alone defended them; and, on being proceeded against by the archbishop, refused obedience to the process.”

He was also accused of pursuing individuals who differed from him, with most mortal hatred and persecution. It was thence contended, that, if he were now liberated, those he had before injured would again suffer from his resentment;

“so that such persecution of the church would ensue as had not been known since the time of the Emperor Constantine. Secular princes would be stirred up against the clergy, the faithful ministers of Christ depressed, and the enemies of the faith must triumph.” To guard against evils so great, the holy fathers, then assembled in Constance, were solemnly called upon to appoint commissioners to examine Huss on the subject of his opinions, while other learned persons undertook to peruse his books, to gain more conclusive evidence of his heresies.

This representation was promptly acted upon. The Patriarch of Constantinople, and two other prelates, were named to examine witnesses. Some priests from Prague were ready to give evidence; and their testimony, having been sworn to, was read over to Huss, while still suffering under severe indisposition. He desired that a professional advocate might be appointed to answer for him, but that was refused most sternly, as being, in cases of heresy, forbidden by the canon law.

7. Articles were subsequently drawn up, founded on his writings. His books had been unfairly garbled, and some of the charges made against him had no real foundation. In this work the malevolence of Palletz was most active. Despite of confinement and sorrow, under which many a sufferer would have sunk to rise no more, Huss found his

health return in the spring of the year, and his spirits were not so depressed but he could employ his pen with all his wonted energy. He wrote on a variety of subjects interesting to the Christian world. "The Ten Commandments," "The Love and Knowledge of God," "Matrimony," "Penance," "The Three Enemies of Mankind," "The Prayer of Our Lord," and "The Lord's Supper," were the subjects to which he turned his thoughts, in order that the days of his incarceration might not be lost to himself and the world. He remained in the prison of the Franciscans till the Wednesday before Palm-Sunday, when, in consequence of Pope John having escaped in disguise, the prisoner was given up to the emperor and the cardinals, by the Pope's servants, who followed their master in his retreat. The Bishop of Constance was then requested to undertake the charge of Huss, to which he assented, and the Bohemian was transmitted to a castle on the banks of the Rhine, a short distance from the city. He was there most severely dealt with, and closely watched, lest he should endeavour to follow the example of the pontiff. He was placed in a tower; heavy fetters were attached to his limbs, so that he could scarcely move, by day; and when in bed, he was fastened to a rack fixed in the wall. No means were neglected by his merciless adversaries

to exhaust his health, and overthrow that lofty spirit, which, assured that it was engaged in the cause of God, continued, with unconquerable resolution, to oppose itself to all the madness and cruelty of man, and even from its dreary prison to attack the bigotry and corruption of the Romish clergy.

8. It has been seen that one of the most formidable accusations brought against Huss was, that he, favouring the persuasion of his friend Lord Cobham, had been of opinion the church ought not to hold any temporal possessions. The Pope and his cardinals could hardly be expected to deal lightly with a heresy like this. It is not to be wondered at, that the priests of Prague were ready to come forward as witnesses against him who had favoured the seizure of their worldly goods by the temporal lords. The latter were as eager to despoil the spiritual proprietors, as the priests were to retain what they deemed their own. The nobles did not, in the day of his distress, wholly forget what they owed to Huss. They made a representation, under date of May 14th, 1415, setting forth the hardship of his case,—that he had left Prague under the protection of a safe-conduct granted by the emperor, in order that he might refute, before the great Council at Constance, the slanders which had been raised against him in

Bohemia; yet, notwithstanding the assurance that he should not be molested, he had been imprisoned, galled with fetters, and exposed to suffering from hunger and thirst. They showed that, in former cases, heretics had (as at the Council of Pisa, in 1410) been allowed to pass free; yet Huss, neither convicted nor condemned, nor even once heard, was thus harshly dealt with, though always willing, if he could not defend the opinions he held, to retract whatever gave offence to the church. The slanders that had been circulated,—as, that the body of our Saviour had been, in consequence of his preaching, carried up and down in Bohemia in unconsecrated vessels, the holy sacrament being administered by cobblers,—they entreated the council to believe were altogether mere fabrications; and, therefore, they prayed that the prisoner might no longer be harshly used, as his health had suffered, and his life was in danger. In conclusion, they expressed a determination so to deal with the calumniators of Huss, that they should not be able to hold up their heads for shame. On this “bill,” as it was called, being presented, the Bishop of Luthonis considered the last part called upon him for an answer, and, time being given to prepare one, on the 17th of May, the fourth day before Whitsuntide, he put in his reply.

In this document he referred to the alleged

slander on Huss, that cobblers had administered the sacrament, and declared, that, though he and his reverend brethren had done everything in their power to put down the detestable sect of Wickliffites in the kingdom of Bohemia, yet they continued to teach the common people that the sacrament might be so communicated, and those who impugned such doings were denounced as church-robbers. Sacred things had in consequence been brought into such contempt, that, as he was creditably informed, a woman had, in one instance, snatched the body of Christ from the hands of a priest, and administered it to herself, at the same time affirming, that a good laywoman might better consecrate, and with more propriety give absolution, than a wicked priest; and this was only one of many errors which this woman had learned. He, therefore, feeling what great mischief might be done to Christ's church by such pestiferous sects, with all reverence and charity called on the reverend fathers there assembled in that sacred council, to devise some remedy for the evil. In reply to the complaint of Huss having been seized in violation of a safe-conduct granted previously to his leaving Prague, he stated that safe-conduct not to have been procured for him by his friends till he had been fifteen days in prison.

The statement of the bishop was given in on a

Thursday, and on the Saturday the nobles replied to it. They "insisted and offered the most convincing proofs that the safe-conduct for Huss had been obtained before his imprisonment. If he had, as was affirmed against him, remained five years under excommunication, they averred that they had it not only from him, but from Prince Wincelaus and other persons of good credit, that he would willingly have appeared in Rome to vindicate himself, if he could have obtained a safe-conduct. That he had preached on his way to Constance, and in that city, they utterly denied; and the Baron de Chlume was willing to bind himself in any sum of money, or other penalty, to prove the imputation unfounded. They claimed for him but such indulgence as had been granted to persons accused of heresy, and trusted that, in taking those proceedings against him which were necessary, he would be treated with all gentleness.

To this appeal no answer was returned, but those with whom it had originated did not abandon him to his fate. On the 23rd of May, another address was forwarded to the council, in which they strongly recommended the liberation of Huss, in order that he might be able the better to defend himself. They referred to a protestation which he had made, that he never would obstinately defend any error when it should be proved to be such by

the law of Christ. His liberation they urged as necessary to the recovery of his health, seeing he could thus be more conveniently examined by commissioners appointed to perform that task, when, they doubted not, he would successfully rebut the accusations which malice had brought against him.

9. In every part of his conduct Huss is to be admired. Content to die in the sacred cause he had espoused, he was not so ambitious of the crown of martyrdom as to neglect any means within his reach, which he could consistently use, to save his life for a career of extended usefulness. Sickness could not subdue his reason; he never lost his presence of mind; nor could all the fearful array against him abate his courage. A letter which he wrote to his friend the baron before his trial, if the process of condemnation to which he was subjected deserves so respectable a name, shows that he retained full possession of all the resources of a powerful and rational understanding. In this he says—

“ If my letter be not sent to Bohemia, keep it and send it not, for hurt may come thereof.

“ Item. If the king do ask who ought to be my judge, say that the council neither did call me nor cite me, neither was I accused before the council; and yet the council hath imprisoned me, and hath appointed their council against me.

“Item. I desire, right noble Lord John, if audience shall be given me, that the king may be there present himself, and that I may have a place appointed near to him, that he may hear me well, and understand what I say; and that you also, with the Lord Henry, and with Lord Wenceslaus, and other men, if you may, will be present, and hear what the Lord Jesus Christ, my procurator and advocate, and most gracious judge, will put into my mouth to speak; that, whether I live or die, you may be true and upright witnesses with me, lest lying lips shall say, hereafter, that I swerved from the truth which I preached.

“Item. Know you that before witnesses in the prison I desired the commissioners that they would depute some one a proctor and an advocate; and they promised to do so, and afterwards did not. Wherefore, I have committed myself to the Lord Jesus Christ, that he will be my procurator, and advocate, and judge of my conduct.

“Item. Know you that they have, as I suppose, no other appeal against me, but this, that I stood against the Pope’s bull, which Pope John sent to Bohemia, to sanctify water with the sign of the cross, and full remission of sins to all who

would take up the holy cross to fight for the patri-
mony of the church, against Ladislaus King of
Naples; and they have my own writing, which was
read against me, and I do acknowledge it to be
mine. Secondly, they have against me that I
have continued so long in excommunication, and
yet did take upon myself to minister in the church
and say mass. Thirdly, they have against me,
because I did appeal from the Pope to Christ, for
they read my appeal before me, and which, with a
willing mind, smiling I confessed before them all
to be mine. Fourthly, because I left a certain
letter behind, which was read in the church of
Bethlehem, the which letter my adversaries have
very evil-favouredly translated, and sinisterly ex-
pounded; in the which I did write that I went not
out without a safe-conduct from the Pope. Where-
unto you yourselves can say and bear me record,
that I, in my going out, had none, neither did I
know that you would go out with me when I wrote
that letter.

“Item. If audience may be given to me, and
that, after the same audience, the king would suffer
me not to be returned to prison, but that I may
have your counsel, and that of others of my friends,
and if it may please God that I may say some-
thing to my sovereign lord the king, on the behalf
of Christianity and for his own profit,” &c.

Here we find him acutely criticising the conduct of his enemies, calling on his friends to give him such support as he might reasonably hope their influence could procure, and, withal, manifesting a noble anxiety that they should be present before the council to hear his defence, and to vindicate his name from the calumny which he foresaw would be heaped upon it, when he should be no more.

But this, though he looked upon it as that which must occur in the fullness of time, many circumstances prove he little imagined would be accomplished soon. Like Lord Cobham, he had before him the encouraging triumph of Wickliffe; and the extreme favour which he himself had generally met with, had not prepared him to expect that his enemies were ready to proceed to extremes. It was not degrading arrogance that blinded him to danger; but the consciousness that he was right, and the strong persuasion that this he could prove to the satisfaction of all men, filled his bosom with the pious hope that reason must triumph, and that his would be the glory of a peaceful victory: and perhaps, remembering that he had once been opposed to the opinions of Wickliffe, he exulted in standing before the world as their determined advocate. As Paul, after persecuting the followers

of the Saviour, rejoiced in suffering as one of them, so the Bohemian found his mind soothed and comforted by the reflection that even his tribulation tended to advance the good cause in which his heart was most earnestly engaged.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE.

1. Huss imitates the apostles in prison.—2. Dissensions in the Council of Constance.—3. Greatness of England asserted.—4. Proceedings of the Council.—5. The nobles of Bohemia again come forward.—6. Indecorous and extraordinary scenes—Huss pursued with increased rancour.

1. THE mind of John Huss, through the whole of that painful period which followed the outrageous seizure of his person at Constance, was fixed with devout admiration on the sublime examples furnished by the disciples of Jesus, in their days of tribulation. He was in a great degree consoled by the reflection that he only experienced a repetition of their sorrows, while attempting to tread in their steps. The style of their epistles he affected in some of his letters, or the circumstances in which he was placed caused him, unconsciously, to imitate their language. One of them begins—

“ John Huss, in hope the servant of God, to all the faithful in Bohemia which love the Lord,

wiseth to stand and die in the grace of God, and, at last, to attain to eternal life. Amen.

“Ye that here rule over others, and be rich, and ye, also, that be poor, well-beloved, and faithful in God, I beseech you, and admonish you all, that ye will be obedient unto God, make much of his word, and, gladly hearing the same, will humbly perform that which you hear. I beseech you, stick fast to the verity of God’s word, which I have written and preached unto you, out of his laws, and the sermons of his saints. Also, I desire you, if any man, either in public sermon or in private talk, have heard of me anything, or have read anything written by me, which is against the verity of God, that ye do not follow the same; albeit, I do not find my conscience guilty, that I have spoken or written any such thing amongst you.”

Another letter, which we shall transcribe at length, presents us with a vivid picture of the cruelty to which he was subjected, and of the patience and piety with which he endured it all. It renders the scenes which passed four hundred years ago, present to the “mind’s eye,” as the events of our own time:—

“Health be to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. My dear friend, know that Palletz came to me to persuade me that I should not fear the

shame of abjuration, but to consider the good which thereof would come. To whom I said, 'that the shame of condemnation and burning is greater than to abjure; and why should I fear, then, that shame? But, I pray you, tell me plainly your mind. Pre-suppose that such articles were laid to you, which you knew not to be true, what would you do in that case? Would you abjure?' He answered, 'The case is sore;' and began to weep. And many other things he spake, which I could not but reprehend. Michael de Causis was sometimes before the prison with the deputies; and, when I was with the deputies, thus I heard him say to the keepers:—'We, by the grace of God, will burn this heretic shortly, for whose case I have spent many florins.' But yet, understand that I write not this to the intent to revenge me of him, for that I have committed to God, and pray to God for him with all my heart.

“Yet I exhort you again to be circumspect about our letters, for Michael hath taken such orders that none shall be suffered to come into the prison; no, nor yet the keepers' wives are permitted to approach me. O! holy God! how largely doth Antichrist extend his power and cruelty! But I trust that his power shall be shortened, and his iniquity detected, more and more among the faithful people.

“ Almighty God shall confirm the hearts of his faithful, whom he has chosen before the creation of the world, that they may receive the eternal crown of glory. And let Antichrist rage as much as he will, yet he shall not prevail against Christ, which shall destroy him with the spirit of his mouth, as the apostle saith; and then shall the creature be delivered out of the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God, as is expressed in the words following:— ‘ We, also, within our fellows, do groan, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God—the redemption of our body.’

“ I am greatly comforted in those words of our Saviour:—‘ Happy are you when men shall hate you, and shall separate you, and shall rebuke you, and shall cast out your name as execrable for the son of man. Rejoice and be glad, for, behold, great is your reward in heaven!’—Luke vi. O worthy! yea, most worthy consolation, which, not to understand, but to practise, in time of tribulation, is a hard lesson!

“ This rule St. James, with the other apostles, did well understand, who saith,—‘ Count it exceeding joy, my brethren, when ye shall fall into divers temptations, knowing that the probation of your faith worketh patience; let Patience have her perfect work; for certainly it is a great

matter for a man to rejoice in trouble, and take it for joy to be in divers temptations.' A slight matter it is to speak it, and to expound it; but a great matter to fulfil it: for why, our most patient and most valiant champion himself, knowing that he should rise again the third day, overcoming his enemies by his death, and redeeming from damnation his elect, after his last supper, was troubled in spirit, and said,—'My soul is heavy unto death.' Of whom also the gospel saith, that he began to fear, to be sad and heavy, who, being then in an agony, was confirmed by an angel, and his sweat was like drops of blood, falling on the ground. And yet he, notwithstanding being so troubled, said to his disciples,—'Let not your hearts be troubled;' 'neither fear the cruelty of them that persecute you, for you shall have me with you always, that you may overcome the tyranny of your persecutors.' Whereupon those—his soldiers—looking upon the Prince and King of glory, sustained great conflicts. They passed through fire and water, and were saved, and received the crown of the Lord God, of the which St. James, in his canonical epistle, saith,—'Blessed is the man that suffereth temptation, for, when he shall be proved, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to those that love him.' Of this crown, I trust steadfastly, the Lord will make me par-

taker also with you, which be the fervent sealers of the truth, and with all them which steadfastly and constantly do love the Lord Jesus Christ, which suffered for us, leaving to us an example that we should follow his steps. It behoved him to suffer, as he saith; and us, also, it behoves to suffer, that the members may suffer together with the head: 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.'"

He concludes this letter with the following eloquent and expressive prayer:—

“O! most merciful Christ, draw us weak creatures after thee; for, except thou shouldst draw us, we are not able to follow thee. Give us a strong spirit, that it may be ready; and although the flesh be feeble, yet let thy grace go before us, go with us, and follow us; for without thee we can do nothing, and much less submit to the cruel death for thy sake. Give us that prompt and ready spirit, a bold heart and ready faith, a firm hope and perfect charity, that we may give our lives patiently and joyfully for thy name's sake. Amen.

“Written in prison and in bonds, in the vigil of holy St. John the Baptist, who, being in prison and in bonds for the rebuking of wickedness, was beheaded.”

What a commentary does such a letter, written

under such circumstances, invite ! It deserves to be regarded as one which can hardly be too much prized by the Christian world. Glowing with ardent devotion, it displays none of the hardihood or indifference of a God-denying philosophy ; but it exhibits all that unaffected piety could indicate. It breathes no vain confidence, but, full of hope, it invokes aid from above, and no touch of weakness mars or deteriorates the sublime fortitude which a steadfast belief in redeeming mercy created in the oppressed Bohemian's heart. It was not a glow of dreaming enthusiasm, which for a season made him unlike himself—unlike a man ; but it was the working of religious confidence, in unison with worldly reason, which enabled him calmly to look on all the circumstances of his hard case, and, reposing in Divine goodness, to hold himself prepared for any result, and, even in prison superior to his betrayers, to look down with generous compassion on those who were dooming him to death.

2. In connexion with the great Council of Constance, it is interesting to remark, while “The unity of the church must be preserved” was the general cry, what fearful discord raged among those who caused it to assemble. The members were indeed unanimous in condemning certain opinions which affected their temporal welfare, and resolved to incur the guilt of sacrificing a man who had stood

up for self-denying purity in the church, but on other points they were as fiercely opposed to each other as they were to John Huss and his ministry.

Chichely had acted an important part in bringing the council together. Though to put an end to the schism created by the pretensions of three candidates, or pretenders, to the papal chair, was the first thing proposed to be done, it had another object in view, of at least equal, if not of still greater moment—to put down for ever those “damnable and heretical opinions,” as they were termed, which grew on the spread of “Wickliffe learning.” This was regarded as an English question. The English prelacy was active in pressing it on the council, and Richard Clifford Bishop of London, John Keterich Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and Nicholas Babwith Bishop of Bath, were despatched to Constance to assist at its deliberations. They considered that on them devolved a most important part, and, of course, they were much surprised at finding, when the council was about to sit, that an objection was made to their taking any share in the proceedings. France, Italy, Germany, and Spain, were there to be represented, but Petrus de Alliaco, Cardinal of the Camera, and the French bishop, objected to the recognition of England as a fifth nation, on the ground that it ought to be considered as comprehended in the

representation of Germany. The King of France, they affirmed, had employed all his interest and power to promote the union of the church, and his realm, without offence to England, deserved more consideration than to be treated as the equal of a state which had no claim to be regarded as a fifth nation, seeing that each of the other four contained within their limits many provinces which singly were equal to the whole of England. They urged that Pope Benedict the Twelfth had, in one of his decretals, divided the papal dominions into four general parts or nations. The first contained France, Navarre, Dauphiny, Burgundy, Savoy, Provence, and the county of Falciquern; the second, Germany, England, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Scotland; the third, Castile, Leon, Arragon, and Portugal; and to the fourth he allotted Apulia, Calabria, Terra de Lavoro, Tuscany, and other parts of Italy, with Sicily, Sardonian, Corsica, Cyprus, and Slavonia. It followed that the council could only be held to be formed of four nations, and that England must be comprehended under the head of Germany. If she were received as a distinct nation, the provinces of other states might claim a similar honour. To give England the same dignity as the other four parts of the papal empire, would be great injustice, as each of them contained

more archbishoprics, bishoprics, and universities; and, especially, would it be a wrong done to the honour of France, which boasted of eleven provinces or sees of archbishops, while England presented no more than two provinces.

3. Great was the indignation of the English bishops, at finding themselves and their country thus treated. They complained of it with bitterness, and insisted that the object of Pope Benedict was not to divide Christendom into four great parts, but only to assign to his visitors the several countries which they were to visit. That he never meant to reckon England as a part of Germany was clear, since, in the decretal referred to, the provinces of Canterbury and York, and of Dublin, Armagh, Cassels, and Tuam, in Ireland, and the province of Scotland, were not placed among those of Germany, but were named promiscuously among others. They added, all the world knew England to have anciently held, and still to retain, many kingdoms, each of which was more considerable than France. Besides dukedoms and islands, there were eight kingdoms, three of which—England, Scotland, and Wales—made the island of Great Britain; and four more composed Ireland: and to these must be added the isles and kingdom of Man, and the principality of John Prince of the Orcades. It was invidious to make comparisons, but, since

the French had done so, the English, in vindication of the honour of their country, were bound to state, that, in the antiquity of their nation, in the greatness and majesty of their kings, in the dignity of their clergy, and in the wealth and numbers of their people, England was far superior to France. They added, "In France, strictly taken, there were only two archiepiscopal sees, Rheims and Sens, and twenty dioceses; but in England there were two large provinces, Canterbury and York, and twenty-five dioceses; and while, in all the French king's dominions, there were but sixty, in England there were no fewer than a hundred and ten; and whereas in France there were scarcely six thousand parishes, in England there were fifty-two thousand, richly endowed, besides collegiate churches, monasteries, and hospitals.

4. The arguments of the English prelates prevailed, and they were admitted to sit in the Council. Four presidents were named—the Patriarch of Antioch for France, Anthony Archbishop of Rigen for Italy, Nicholas Archbishop of Genusuensis for Germany, and Nicholas Bishop of Bath for England.

This is not the place to give an exact report of all that passed in the Council. Many tomes might be filled with the proceedings. We propose to offer little but what has a direct bearing on the

cases of those champions for a reform in the church, who were the especial objects of priestly rage, from the fearless hostility which they had opposed to the frauds of the Pope and his creatures. The Council assembled on the 28th of November 1414, but the Emperor Sigismund, who was expected to grace it with his presence, not having arrived, it was prorogued till the 17th of December. A further prorogation was then deemed necessary, as the coming of Sigismund was still deferred. He at length reached Constance on the 23rd of that month, at midnight, accompanied by his empress.

Like the first assemblings of all great bodies, the opening formalities were, comparatively, of little interest: they consisted mainly of resolutions declaratory of the legal constitution of the Council, and of their right to continue their sittings, even if the Pope should withdraw, or attempt to dissolve them, and of regulations for their future guidance and the preservation of good order. The last object, however, was but very imperfectly obtained, and much confusion ensued, so that, in their fifteenth session, it was judged necessary to command that silence should be kept by all parties, on pain of excommunication. It was declared that "the great curse should fall on any person, high or low,—emperor, king, and cardinal not excepted,—who should disturb the council with any manner of noise, by hand, foot, or voice."

The second representation made by the nobles of Bohemia in favour of Huss was not passed over unnoticed. In the name of the council, the Patriarch of Antioch took upon himself to reply, that injustice should not be done, and that, if the adversaries of the Bohemian had brought charges against him which were unfounded, the result would be to cover them with ignominy. But a peremptory refusal answered the request which had been pressed, to liberate him on security being given for his appearance. To *that*, he said, the council could not agree, in this man's case, since the prisoner was one on whose faith or credit no reliance could be placed. He however promised that Huss should be brought to Constance and permitted fully to speak his mind before the council.

The assurance that he should be heard was deemed an important concession. At one time, the venerable and sacred persons who formed the council entertained the monstrous thought of condemning John Huss, unseen and unheard, on the mere view of his writings, or on the evidence which relentless enemies volunteered against him. And such a course they held to be consistent with religion, and likely to gratify a God of mercy, whose name, by such horrors, they declared, with sickening blasphemy, it was their

sole object "to glorify." To glorify!—as if the purity, before which "all our righteousness is but as filthy rags," could derive new lustre from mortal cruelty, rendered more odious by association with pretended adoration of everlasting benevolence!

On the same day on which the nobles received the answer of the patriarch, they made a supplicatory representation to the Emperor Sigismund, in which they set forth the appeal they had forwarded to the council, with "one mind, consent, and accord," in favour of Huss. In conclusion, they said,—

"We, therefore, most humbly require and pray your princely majesty, that, both for the love of justice, and also the fair renown of the famous land of Bohemia, whereof we acknowledge you the undoubted true lord and heir successor, you, looking to the import of your safe-conduct, will favourably countenance the most reasonable and just supplication made to the council aforesaid, and lend your helping hand that they may effectually hear us. And lest the enemy of the fame and renown of Bohemia should hereafter slander us by saying we have urged an unreasonable prayer, we have desired that they would be pleased to authorise our said supplication, by setting their hand and seal to it; and we most earnestly pray

your highness, in like manner, that you will vouchsafe to give us your testimony."

To this proper and very respectful application the emperor gave no answer. Already his resolution had begun to waver, or he had made up his mind that no faith was to be kept with one accused of heresy, and that the honour of a great monarch could not be tarnished by quibbling fraud and cold-hearted treachery.

The 5th day of June was named by the Patriarch of Antioch for bringing John Huss before the council, when he promised those who had interested themselves in his behalf, that he should have free liberty to speak his mind, and "be lovingly and gently heard." In the convent of Franciscans on that day, the cardinals, bishops, and priests assembled in great numbers, and in awful form; and, notwithstanding the promise that had been made, it was proposed that, before John Huss was admitted to their presence, they should decide on the articles which they had gathered from his books, and on the answers which they had already received. This flagrant violation of good faith seemed about to be resolved upon, when a notary, one Peter Mlademewitz, who had much regard for Huss, hastened to make the Baron de Chlume and his friends acquainted with what was intended. They lost no time in communicating it

to the emperor, and, in that instance, so effectual were their representations, that Sigismund, Louis the County Palatine of Heidelberg, and the Lord Frederick Burgrave of Nuremberg, declared that nothing should be done against Huss by the council in his absence, and, in consequence, the proceedings were suspended.

The Baron de Chlume and another of his friends humanely endeavoured to improve the time thus gained, by forwarding a digest of the opinions entertained by Huss, to the princes who had interfered, and to several members of the Council. These epitomes were transmitted to the cardinals and bishops, and on the following day, when their author next appeared before the Council, they were produced against him. Strong in the rectitude of his intentions, he met the charge without any symptoms of shrinking alarm, and avowed that he had written the matter objected to.

6. Most extraordinary was the scene which followed. In these times a tumult in a court of justice, though only in approbation of a righteous decision, is uniformly reprehended as a sin against decorum; but in the Council of Constance, the members of which claimed reverence for their sanctity, the disorder which prevailed, after the first article had been read against Huss, was so great, that the prisoner in vain attempted to speak,

and the defence, on which he had confidently relied, drawn as it was from Scripture, was refused a hearing. He manfully strove against the opposition, formidable and overpowering as it was; but, if he for a moment succeeded in raising his voice above the clamour, an insulting sneer immediately interrupted the unfortunate speaker, and a yell of fiendlike triumph rendered it impossible for him to proceed with any hope of being listened to, by those whom he had weakly imagined were not inaccessible to reason, and not insensible to, or unmindful of, the claims of justice and religion. Huss often renewed the attempt to make his true sentiments known, but to no purpose; and he at length abandoned it in despair, and stood silent before the Council. Great was the general exultation then. "He is dumb," "He can no longer pretend to defend his damnable errors," were the cries which burst forth in that "sacred assembly," as it was called. These at length subsided, and an air of moderation was assumed. In the excited state of the Council, it was resolved to proceed no further at that time. The prisoner was ordered to be removed, and to be brought up again the next day.

On the 7th of July the fate of this good man and intrepid reformer was to be decided. An almost total eclipse of the sun occurred, but this celestial sign, though viewed with awe, did not induce

the cardinals and bishops to relax in the pursuit of the victim they had enthralled. Far from regarding it as an indication of Divine wrath, when the great orb of light regained its wonted lustre, they conceived it but to figure that thus should the church regain all its pristine splendour, when the gloom of reform should be subdued by the destruction of its generous advocate, Huss. At an early hour the council resumed its sitting, and the prisoner, escorted by a body of armed men, was brought before them. The charges previously exhibited were then repeated; and some of the Bohemian priests spoke to his having publicly maintained those opinions which were denounced as errors. He solemnly denied that they were his. Questioned on the subject of the sacrament, he admitted that after consecration the bread used in it became the body of Christ, but still considering that in one sense it remained bread. He was accused of crafty evasion, and taunted with imitating the artful shiftings of Wickliffe. Two of the English prelates pressed him closely on this point. Huss admitted, what many subsequent reformers could never be brought to comprehend, —that the bread used became the identical body of the Saviour, which was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death on the cross, and rose from the grave to sit on the right hand of God; but this was not going far enough for his examiners, who held that,

because he did not consider the bread to be wholly annihilated, he meant to maintain the fearful heresy that material bread still remained after the solemn, sanctifying words had been pronounced. One Stokes, an Englishman, supported this charge, and declared to the Council that, being at Prague, he had seen a treatise which was ascribed to Huss, and therein it was positively affirmed that material bread existed, though consecration had been performed. Huss pointedly declared, but with reverend courtesy to the witness, that he had written no such work. The priests severally made oath that the evidence they had previously given was correct; and one of them, named John Protyway, a parish-priest of Prague, added that Huss had spoken disparagingly of the authority of St. Gregory. Huss strongly denied it, and said he had ever held St. Gregory to be a most holy doctor of the church, and a virtuous man. This had no effect on his judges. His case was truly hopeless. If he stated his thoughts to be in unison with theirs, he was accused of craft and dissimulation; and if he differed from them, he was condemned for obstinacy and error.

The man accused of heresy was not to be endured by such judges. Even where they wrung from weakness the submission demanded, still they remained unsatisfied. Offers of pardon were reite-

rated to the last moment of the sufferer's life ; but the victim had good reason to apprehend, that, if it were accepted, he could hardly escape. The enemies of reform thirsted for blood, and the unhappy man who attempted to escape from their grasp was still rancorously pursued. His footsteps were unceasingly watched by the instruments of persecution, who were ready to magnify the slightest offence into an enormous crime. Sometimes those who recanted were detained in prison, and subjected to a series of hardships and indignities, which rendered the life they retained valueless. A knowledge of these facts possibly rendered Huss and others more steadfast than they might else have been found. There can, however, be no doubt that the Bohemian's heart was sincerely engaged in the cause, and his firmness could neither be shaken by temptation or danger.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ALLEGED OFFENCES OF JOHN HUSS.

1. Continuation of proceedings against Huss.—2. John Gerson.—3. Huss vindicates the propriety of appealing from an earthly tribunal to Christ.—4. Huss a pictorial satirist.—5. The emperor's safe-conduct no protection.—6. Cruelty of Sigismund.—7. Huss defends himself, but is not listened to.—8. Epitome of his opinions.—9. Harsh treatment of the reformer.—10. An imperial disputant.—11. Bodily sufferings of Huss while in prison.

1. FEW minds could have continued so long the unequal struggle. With every display of power and authority, and every disposition in connexion with the former to exercise the latter with measureless severity, the council could not intimidate or silence one patient but determined man. He was insultingly mocked as an enemy to truth. The Cardinal of Florence expressed vast surprise that Huss should expect to gain credence, when he impugned the testimony of so many good men.

“I take God and my conscience to witness,” the prisoner earnestly replied, “that these men have not

feared to allege against me that which they never heard. Were they as many more in number as they are, much more, and beyond all comparison, should I esteem the witness of my Lord God."

The cardinal answered him by declaring that the council must act, not on his declarations, but on the facts proved by unexceptionable evidence. He was satisfied that the witnesses bore him no malice; and remarked in particular that Stephen Palletz, who had been charged with misrepresenting his opinions by garbling his writings, he (the cardinal) considered, far from doing so, had, in many instances, softened down passages to favour him. A like charge, he said, had been with equal injustice preferred against several eminent men, and, amongst others, against Gerson the Chancellor of Paris, "than whom," added the cardinal, "there is not a more excellent, pious, and Christian man in the whole world."

2. If infuriated bigotry, if a raging desire to shed the blood of those he deemed in error, constitute a claim to piety, John Gerson merited the panegyric of the Cardinal of Florence. He held, that to draw the sword of justice against heretics was an act of mercy, as well as a duty. The inactivity of Wenceslaus King of Bohemia, while the new principles were making rapid conquests of the hearts of his subjects, Gerson, and those who

thought with him, fiercely condemned as an instance of impious negligence. However clearly it was shown that reform was wanted in the church, he could not for a moment, even while constrained to admit its necessity, be induced to regard with complacency the labours of Huss, and of his friend and pupil Jerome. The doctrines attributed to the Bohemian were formally condemned by the university of Paris, acting under the influence of Gerson. His signature authorised the public act. In this furious document it was admitted that there was ample room for reform in the church, notwithstanding that by him it was opposed with such steadfast resolution. "Though there appears," says this act, "on the part of these heretics, some zeal against the vices of the bishops, *which, in truth, are very great and manifest, still their zeal is defective, as it is not sufficiently enlightened. A discreet mind tolerates and deplors the sins which it finds in the house of God, when it cannot altogether remove them. It however is impossible to correct vice by vice, and error by error; as the devil is not expelled by Beelzebub, but by the spirit of the Almighty, whose will it is that the correction of abuses be undertaken with great prudence and due regard to existing circumstances.*"

Gerson was learned and ingenious, and, in the

estimation of many, intrepid, and eminently pious. But he was of opinion that the name of religion could be properly used, by artifice, to form a snare for those who, unsuspectingly, might too readily believe what they were told by their king or their bishop. Of this we have a pregnant instance in the harangue made by him, in the name of the university of Paris, to King Charles the Sixth and all his council, setting forth the principles by which both the king and the kingdom ought to be governed.*

Huss was formally arraigned before the council for teaching and defending certain erroneous doctrines, and more especially for favouring the opinions of Wickliffe, even though he knew them to be condemned at Rome. He answered with great readiness, denying that he was guilty of what had been urged against him. If Wickliffe had sowed errors in England, he considered the Eng-

* “ Qui n'a foy à Dieu, son souverain Seigneur, et à s' y mesmes, comme la gardera il à autruz. *Qui sibi nequam cui bonus?* Exemple, notez in historia tripartita, comment Constantin esprouva ses bons amis: Il fist crier, que tous ceux qui voudroient renier la loy et foy Crestienne seroient ses bons amis et prochains conseillers; les autres s'en partirent tantost. Plusieurs renièrent la loy: aucun s'en partirent en la gardant. Constantin mua sa sentence: il retint les loyaux à Dieu, en disant, ‘ Si vous ne gardez foy à vostre Dieu, quelle espérance doy-ie avoir que loyauté vous me faciez?’ ”

lish ought to look to that; but, for his own part, those opinions of Wickliffe with which he was acquainted were such as he durst not condemn. The indiscriminating fury with which the writings of that eminent man had been pursued, he did not fear to expose and reprehend. Many doctors of Prague, he affirmed, held parts of them in great respect; but in consequence of an order from the Pope, that all men should give up Wickliffe's books, he, when it was intended to burn them at Prague, had presented such as he had to the archbishop, and requested him, if he found any errors or heresy in them, to mark the same, and he would publish them to the world; but the archbishop, instead of complying with his request, had committed the works of the English reformer to the flames without reading them. The bull, or order, under which this was done, was said to have been procured, by artful misrepresentations, from Pope Alexander the Fifth; and a representation was made by many of the members of the university of Prague, to stay the proceedings under it. An appeal to the king on this subject met with a favourable reception, and the archbishop, in obedience to the royal will, consented to let the matter rest till the books had been further examined. How he kept his promise we learn from what Huss thought it pertinent to mention while before the council.

3. "After this," said he, "Pope Alexander the Fifth being dead, the archbishop, fearing lest the bull received from him would not continue in force under the new pontiff, called his adherents about him, and, shutting the gates of his court, being guarded by soldiers, he burned all Wickliffe's books which had been there collected, and commanded that, from that time forward, no man should teach in chapels under pain of excommunication. Thereupon," he continued, "I desired to appeal to Pope Alexander, but, he being dead, I appealed to his successor. At Rome, for the space of two years, my advocates applied for a hearing in vain. Then did I appeal to the high judge of all, even to Jesus Christ."

Huss had been well supplied with the writings of the English reformer. They were prepared and sent for him by Lord Cobham. Not fewer than two hundred volumes are recorded to have been forwarded to him for perusal and distribution,—a splendid instance of the generosity, as well as of the zeal, of the English champion of religion, purified from the vices by which impious men had laboured but too successfully to degrade it.

A question was raised as to the lawfulness of the appeal he stated himself to have made to the Saviour of man. The prisoner ably defended it by a reference to what was done in earthly courts; and

as, there, nothing was more common than, in a case where wrong was done by an inferior judge, to appeal to higher authority, he contended that nothing could be more correct than for one suffering, like himself, under an earthly judge, to appeal to Jesus Christ.

But this reasoning was treated with scorn, as puerile in the extreme; and it was now alleged that he had, on many occasions, sounded the praises of the English heretic Wickliffe. Among other things, it was said he had declared that once, when he was confronted by his enemies in a church, the door burst open, and they were in great danger of being destroyed by a vivid blast of lightning; and such was his conviction that the detested Wickliffe was the favourite of Heaven, that he had been heard to wish his soul might reach the same place where, he felt assured, the spirit of the English reformer reposed.

That he had spoken to this effect, he could not deny; but, in explanation, he told the council that, many years before any of his writings on divinity found their way into Bohemia, he had seen certain works on philosophy from his pen, which he greatly admired, and, when informed of the goodly life which their author had led, he had then expressed doubt whether such a man could be damned,

and wished his own soul might be admitted to the same place where that of Wickliffe was.

Such an admission was a great triumph to his accusers; and, forgetful of all decorum, they mocked the speaker with a burst of laughter. To suppose Wickliffe's ideas on any subject could be rational and good, they held to be a gross absurdity; and to doubt that a preacher so much out of favour with them, now that he was in his grave, could be other than doomed to everlasting perdition, was an extravagance so outrageous, that it provoked their mirth.

One really serious charge was brought against Huss. It was this,—that he had counselled his hearers, after the example of Moses, that every man should resist with the sword all who might be found to oppose the doctrines he taught; that brother should not spare brother, nor neighbour neighbour. He strongly denied that he had acted such a part, or advised his congregation to assume other armour than that commended by the apostle—the sword and helmet of salvation. Of a material sword he had never spoken. The charge, nevertheless, was pressed; and it was asserted that the clergy of Bohemia had been despoiled, and reduced to great distress, in consequence of his preaching. A doctor, named Naso, who had been in the court

of King Wenceslaus, came forward to support this accusation ; and the Cardinal of Cambray, one of the judges, declared he had had the fact several years before from the lips of certain Bohemian prelates. Huss repeated his denial, but owned that he had approved of some of the resolutions of the king, which had been condemned at Rome.

4. One offence, which had greatly outraged the Pope and those who were now joining with him to put down heresy, and which had contributed in no slight degree to the gall and rancour which swelled their hearts, was not forgotten on this occasion. It appears, certain pictures had been produced by him, or at his suggestion. One qualification Huss possessed, which it is not very common to find associated with meekness and devotion like his : he had a keen sense of the ridiculous, and was a powerful satirist. His enemies writhed under his lash. They were outrageously indignant at the paintings in question, which placed the Pope and his cardinals in a situation so exquisitely farcical, that, to all but those whose interests were bound up with theirs, it afforded infinite amusement. It represented the entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, riding on an ass's colt, in juxta-position with the entrance of the Pope upon the duties of his high office, surrounded by all the pomp which mean worldly vanity could imagine or create. The for-

mer exhibited the Saviour, simple, august, and glorious, though encompassed with everything that might image extreme poverty; the latter, with all the gorgeous trappings of overgrown pride, made the representative of St. Peter appear most contemptible. Could an artist desire a richer subject for his pencil? Could a satirist hope to see his shafts more worthily sped?

5. Again and again the misdeeds above mentioned were laid to his charge. His answers were met with cold derision, or indignant reproof. Weary at length of the exercise of their tormenting powers, it was resolved to close the proceedings for the day, and to place the prisoner in the custody of the Bishop of Rigen. He was about to be removed, when the Cardinal of Cambray desired him to remain, and addressed him to the following effect:

“John Huss, I have heard that you say, had you not been disposed, of your own accord, to come to Constance, neither the King of Bohemia, nor the emperor himself, could have compelled you to do so.”

“Most reverend fathers,” Huss replied, “such language I never used; but this I did say,—that there was in Bohemia a great number of nobles and gentlemen who favoured and loved me, and who might have concealed me in some secret place, that I could not have been easily constrained to

appear before the council, by the king or the emperor."

At hearing this, though Huss spoke in a subdued tone, and with much meekness of deportment, the cardinal is described to have turned pale with rage, and the angry murmurs of the council were stern and loud. Thereupon, the cardinal, finding their sentiments perfectly in unison with his own, exclaimed,—

"Behold the shameless effrontery of this man!"

Unawed by the rising storm, and anxious only to perform his duty towards the friend he loved, the Baron de Chlume here generously stepped forward to offer his testimony on behalf of Huss.

"He has spoken no more than the truth," said he; "for I, who, in comparison with many others, am but an insignificant person in the kingdom of Bohemia, *I* could have defended him safely, for one year, against all the force of those great and mighty monarchs, if I would have taken it in hand. How much more effectually, then, might he have been protected by others, who, with infinite kindly feeling for him, possessed castles of infinitely greater strength than any I can claim!"

The cardinal was a little taken by surprise, and somewhat baffled. He cared not to provoke further the gallant zeal of De Chlume, and therefore, intimating that it might be well to change the sub-

ject, he took the tone of a stern but friendly monitor, and, reminding Huss that in prison he had promised to submit to the wisdom and authority of the council, assured him that to do so with perfect resignation would tend both to his profit and honour.

In this language there was something which would have frightened a timid, half-resolved reformer into trembling submission; but a still more severe trial remained for the poor beleaguered Bohemian. The emperor, deeming it of importance to possess the good will of the cardinals and bishops who took the lead in the council, now distinctly intimated to the destined victim that his imperial mind was made up to forfeit his mortal honour, and to trifle with his future salvation. He took upon himself to support the cardinal's recommendation, and, directing his speech to the prisoner, delivered himself to the following effect:—

6. "Though some there are who say that it was on the fifteenth day after your imprisonment that you obtained our letters of safe-conduct, it can be proved, by the testimony of many princes and noblemen, that they were obtained for you before you left Prague. We gave them, that, under their protection, none might harm you on your way hither, but that you might have liberty to speak freely before all the council, and to answer touching

your faith and doctrine ; and, as you see, the lords, and cardinals, and bishops have so dealt with you that we do very well perceive their good will towards you, for which we have great cause to thank them. Now, forasmuch as many have told us that we may not and ought not of right to defend any man who is a heretic, or who is suspected of heresy, we hold it right to give you even the self-same counsel which the Cardinal of Cambray has offered to you already, that you be not obstinate to maintain any opinion, but submit yourself, as in duty bound, to the council, in all things proved against you by credible witnesses. If you do this, we will give order, that, for the love of us and our brother, the council shall suffer you to depart in peace, with an easy and tolerable penance ; but this not done, the presidents of the council will have sufficient grounds for proceeding against you. For ourselves, be fully assured that we will rather prepare and light the fire with our own hands, to consume you, than endure or suffer any longer that you shall maintain the stubbornness of opinion which till now you have manifested. Therefore our advice is, that you submit yourself wholly to the judgment of the council."

To this address Huss answered, "Most noble emperor, I render your imperial highness immortal thanks for your letters of safe-conduct."

Huss might be sincere in expressing gratitude, but the shuffling perfidy of the emperor was so obvious, that, to all present, the language of the persecuted Bohemian seemed like bitter irony. The Baron de Chlume doubted if he had not gone too far, and with kindly anxiety besought him to consider well the situation in which he stood, and not to suffer any feelings of obstinacy to carry him away.

7. Huss was deeply affected by this appeal. "Most gentle lord," he replied, "I take God to witness that I never was minded to maintain any opinion obstinately, and therefore did I come hither of my own free will, that, if any man could bring to my knowledge any more holy doctrine than my own, I might change my opinion without further pause."

On the following day the council sat again in the convent of the Franciscans; and John Huss, as before, was brought before them. His friend, the Baron de Chlume, was also present. On this occasion the bishops produced against him thirty-nine articles, said to be drawn from his books. Some of the opinions imputed to him he readily admitted and frankly defended, but others he utterly disowned as fabrications, supposed to have been the work of the infamous Palletz. To give these articles at length, and the replies they called

forth, would be almost the same thing as omitting them altogether, as they would be found so tedious that few, if any, would read them. A careful digest of the substance of his answers, avoiding repetitions of what has already, more than once or twice, of necessity appeared, will exhibit the most remarkable points in this memorable proceeding.

8. He admitted that the proposition, that there could be but one holy and universal church, was his. St. Paul and St. Peter, he held, had never been members of the devil, but were permitted by God to fall into acts of persecution and perjury, that they might the more gloriously arise; and therefore he inferred that it might be expedient that the elect should offend. Separatists from the church might not be doomed to perdition, as the Saviour says, in the twentieth chapter of St. John, "I have other sheep, which are not of the fold." The predestinate, though not always in a state of grace, according to present justice, never ceased to be a part of the universal church. No dignity or human election could make a man a member of the church, which could only be effected by predestination, by a preparation of grace for the present, for glory to come. The church he had described as the barn of the Lord, containing both good and bad, both reprobate and predestinate. Judas Iscariot, notwithstanding

Christ's election, and the temporal graces given him for his apostleship, was still no true disciple, but a wolf in sheep's clothing. The congregation of the predestinate formed the universal church, of which he held that Christ, and not Peter, had been the head. The Pope, who was called the vicar of Christ, if he followed the steps of Christ by leading a holy life, was his true vicar; but, leading a sinful life, he became the vicar of Judas Iscariot. Priests professing that they knew God, yet indulging in dissolute courses, he regarded, not as true sons of the church, which they defiled, but as unbelieving bastards. The dignity of the Pope was derived from the Emperors of Rome, nor could he be head of the church unless he were ordained by God. The cardinals were not the successors of the disciples, because they lived not after the fashion of the apostles. Heretics, he contended, ought to be given over to the secular power to be put to death, but ought, with all lovingness, to be instructed wherein they were wrong. If, after this, they remained obstinately opposed to the truth, he would then admit it might be just to subject them to bodily punishment. That he, that had been excommunicated by the Pope, might at once appeal from his decision to the judgment of Jesus Christ, he denied that he had asserted; but he himself had complained

that he had been refused a hearing in the Pope's court. Twice he had appealed to the Pope, without any good result; and as it was too tedious a course to make a further appeal to human authority, as a last resource he had addressed himself to the head of the church—to the Lord Jesus Christ. That he had spoken of excommunications as being rather blessings than evils, he denied; but he had so delivered himself on *unjust* excommunications. Interdictments he had objected to, as preventing, on account of one minister, many good men from praising God; and such a course had not been pursued by Jesus Christ, or by Paul. The Saviour, when beaten and blasphemed, had not cursed the offenders, but had prayed for them. His opinions he supported by many passages quoted from the scriptures, and by frequent reference to the fathers. When allowed a hearing, he seems to have proceeded as much at his ease, as if he had been delivering a carefully prepared discourse in his own chapel.

9. The above is a brief summary of the sentiments which he avowed, in answer to the charges made against him. While explaining himself, he had to encounter keen unsparing criticism and coarse reproach. The Cardinal of Cambray declared he had been too leniently dealt with by the framers of the articles, as many more detestable

things were contained in his books than were there set forth. In his sermons, too, he said, Huss had aspersed the cardinals. Why was this done, but from hatred of the church? Better would it have been to have told them of their faults personally, than to have preached against them in their absence. By acting thus, he had disturbed the whole state of the church. When Huss described the circumstances under which he had appealed to Christ, the same prelate reminded him that St. Paul had appealed to the emperor, and demanded "if he (Huss) presumed to set himself up above St. Paul, by carrying his complaint to Christ?" "If," said the prisoner, "I have done so, am I therefore to be accounted a heretic?" St. Paul, let it be remembered, did not appeal to the emperor of his own motion, but by the will of Christ, spoken to him by revelation, and exhorting him "to be firm and constant, for to Rome he must go." He then was about to repeat the appeal which he had made, when the taunts he encountered were so tumultuously loud, that he was obliged to desist.

Besides the articles already described, others, at great length, were prepared by Palletz and others. These were more curious than important, and, from their length, would almost justify the belief that the object was to exhaust his physical strength, by overwhelming him with voluminous accusations.

His answers being concluded, and the sooner from the little attention accorded to what he uttered, the Cardinal of Cambray addressed him in a menacing tone, as follows :—

“Thou hast heard what grievous and horrible crimes are charged against thee; now is the time to decide what course thou wilt pursue. Two ways are open to thy choice;—the one, that thou shalt humbly and meekly submit to the judgment and sentence of the council, and patiently bear and suffer the same. If thou wilt do this, we, on our part, both for the honour of the most gentle emperor here present, and also for that of his royal brother the King of Bohemia, and for thy own preservation, will handle thee with as great humanity, love, and tenderness as we may; but if thou art determined further to maintain and defend any of those articles which have been propounded, we will not deny thee a further hearing. Let this, however, be well understood,—there are men here so clear in knowledge, and having to oppose such strong reasons and arguments to thy articles, that I fear it will be to thy detriment, injury, and great peril, if thou shouldst longer seek to defend the same. This do I speak in the way of counsel, and not in the manner of a judge.”

Again Huss reminded the cardinal and the council that “he had come there of his own free will,

and was sincerely anxious to be convinced of any error or heresy into which he might have fallen. He desired a further hearing, and assured them that, if he could not give substantial reasons for that which he professed to believe, he would willingly bow to their superior information.

A member of the council here remarked on the crafty language of the prisoner, who had said, "he would bow to their information, not that he would receive their correction." Eager to vindicate his sincerity, "Call it," said Huss, "even what you will,—information, determination, or correction. I take God to witness that I say nothing with a sinister intent, but speak with my whole heart and mind."

The cardinal then announced to him that it was decreed by more than sixty doctors, and by the whole council, without one dissenting voice—First, that he should humbly and meekly confess himself to have erred in the articles which had been preferred against him, and promise, on oath, that he would not thenceforth teach, hold, or maintain them; and, secondly, that he should publicly recant them.

Huss meekly but resolutely answered, "I again declare that I am ready to submit myself to the information of the council; but I humbly require, even for his sake who is God over all, that I may

not be compelled to do the thing which is repugnant to my conscience, and which I cannot do without danger of eternal damnation. I have read, in "The Book of Universalities,"* that to abjure, is to renounce an error which a man hath before holden. Now, as many of the opinions here set forth were never in truth mine, I cannot renounce them by oath, without incurring the guilt of perjury; but for those which are really mine, if any man will convince me that they are contrary to the truth, I will most willingly perform all that you desire."

10. "Truly," said the emperor, "I cannot see but you may, with a good conscience, renounce all those opinions which you say have been falsely asserted to be yours. I would not scruple to abjure all errors; nor would it thence follow that I had ever possessed them."

"The word to abjure, most noble emperor," said John Huss, "has, I think, a larger meaning than you have assigned to it."

"But you," interrupted the Cardinal of Florence, "shall have a form of abjuration prepared for you, gentle and tolerable enough; and, on perusing that, you can make up your mind whether to adopt it or not."

* A work written by Gerson.

The emperor began to be weary of the inquiry, and, consequently, indignant at the obstinacy which prolonged it; and, as King Henry of England in a like case had done by Lord Cobham, he now seemed resolved to give up the determined Bohemian to the wrath of his pursuers.

“Thou hast heard,” said he, referring to the words of the Bishop of Cambray, “there are two ways open to thee; first, publicly to renounce the errors proved to have been thine, and subscribe to the judgment of the council, whereby thou shalt find their grace and favour; or thou mayest go on to defend thy opinions. In the latter case, the council will have evidence to judge thee according to its laws and ordinances.”

The prisoner declared, most submissively, that he wished in no respect to oppose himself to the wisdom of the council. “To this only,” said he, “do I object,—to offend God and my conscience, by owning to errors which were never mine; and I pray you all, if it be possible, to grant me the liberty of further speech, that I may answer to those things which have been urged against me, and especially that I may explain what I have advanced touching ecclesiastical offences and the state of the ministry.”

Sigismund then spoke in a still more sternly reproving tone than he had previously used:—

“Thou art of years of discretion,” the emperor remarked, “and can understand what I said to thee yesterday. Credit must be given to witnesses so worthy of credit as those who have appeared against thee. The scripture teacheth that, by the mouth of two or three witnesses, all truth is tried. How, then, can a doubt exist of that to which so many worthy men have deposed? If wise, thou wilt receive thy penance, at the hands of the council, with all humility, and with a contrite heart. Renounce thy manifest errors; promise on oath never more to teach or preach in the like spirit. If thou refusest, there are laws and ordinances which will do justice upon thee.”

This severity, proceeding from so high a quarter animated several of the council to speak against the prisoner, if possible, more harshly than before. They descanted on the laws applicable to obstinate heretics; and one bishop insisted that Huss ought not to be permitted to recant, even if he were willing to profess his readiness to do so. He went further, and stated him to have written to a friend, that, should he be forced to take an oath that he would not preach as heretofore, still his mind would remain unsworn, and, therefore, he ought in no case to be trusted.

No evidence was offered in support of this very serious imputation on the prisoner. It, however,

had its weight with those who were fixed to crush their once dreaded, but now defenceless, assailant. Huss most solemnly affirmed that he had never acted so base a part.

Firm to his cruel purpose, Palletz seemed to reprove the too lenient proceedings of the council, and scornfully asked, "to what end did Huss say he would not defend error, nor favour what was objectionable in the writings of Wickliffe, when it was clearly his resolution to do both?" He exhibited certain additional articles from the writings of Wickliffe, against which he (Palletz) said he, at Prague, had felt it his duty to preach, which articles had been obstinately defended by the prisoner, both in speech, and in books which he had written, and which he was prepared to exhibit. Huss mildly replied, that he was well content that whatever he had written in any of his books should be brought before the council. He however denied that he had written a slanderous article against the Pope which had been published, and of which he was said to be the author. He positively declared that he had never seen it till after he had been imprisoned.

His physical strength was nearly exhausted. He was faint and weary, from want of sleep, and the long and severe examinations to which he had been subjected. He also suffered from torturing

pain in his teeth, and sickness, anxiety, and fatigue combined to overpower him; but still his mind retained its original energy and clearness. It was then that he was accused of an offence which had not been dwelt upon before,—that he had asserted many slanderous things at a public funeral, given to the three men who were beheaded at Prague, for speaking contumaciously of the Pope's bull. He was alleged to have preached a sermon, and to have stirred up the people, on that occasion, to oppose the magistrates' authority; to have contended that the three victims had suffered death for the truth; and thus raised a great commotion in the city, in opposition to his lawful sovereign. It was further represented that a fabricated epistle, purporting to have been sent from the university of Oxford, favouring the opinions of the men put to death, was publicly read by him from the pulpit.

When thus accused, Huss called on the Council not to credit what had been stated. It was untrue that he had gone forth with the remains of the sufferers; but he at the same time declared that they had not been decapitated by the king's command, and therefore, if he had endeavoured to improve so solemn an occasion by preaching on the subject when the bodies were brought to his own chapel of Bethlehem, that was not to act in

opposition to the will of his sovereign. Than this nothing could be more clear; but the Bohemian addressed his words to deaf ears, and appealed to hearts of stone.

CHAPTER XIX.

PROCEEDINGS AT CONSTANCE.

1. Sittings of the Council continued.—2. Palletz and De Causis assert the purity of their intentions.—3. Huss sent back to prison.—4. The Emperor Sigismund.—5. Noble conduct of the Baron de Chlume.—6. Gratitude of Huss.—7. Visions of John Huss in prison.—8. Brutal conduct of Palletz.—9. Public entertainments at Constance while the Council is sitting.—10. St. George's heart.—11. Wise and kind advice of the Baron de Chlume.—12. John Huss on the dangers to be apprehended from women—His will.

1. **PALLETZ** and **Naso** opposed themselves to every favourable inference that might be drawn from the circumstances to which he referred, and aggravated, by every means in their power, the part Huss had taken with regard to the fabricated epistle from Oxford in favour of Wickliffe. They argued that the king had ordered that no one should speak contemptuously of the Pope's bull, and this order had been violated by Huss, and the persons who came to Prague from Oxford. Of the men who had been put to death, they charged

him with saying that they had laid down their lives in opposing Antichrist, and, notwithstanding their sad fate, many more were ready to strive in the same cause.

The facts which he was unable to deny, he explained in such a way, as, before moderately impartial judges, would fully have justified the hope he originally entertained of vindicating all his proceedings to the satisfaction of the Council.

That he had read the paper purporting to come from the university of Oxford, he frankly admitted, but he denied all knowledge of its being a fabrication. It had been brought to him with the seal of the college appended, and he had not doubted that it was genuine. Two scholars had been the bearers of it, and one of them, he added, was as well known to Palletz, as the other had been to him. That, however, was but little, as he had not learned what the man was, but believed him to be an Englishman, and had heard that he died returning to his own country.

A remarkable fact, if true, was mentioned by Palletz, in connexion with the person who accompanied the Englishman reported to have died.—He said he had come from England, but was a Bohemian, and had brought with him a small piece of Wickliffe's tombstone, which was exhibited at Prague as a precious relic, and was, even at

that time, worshipped as a thing most holy. Hence, he contended, from the reverence John Huss had manifested for the English heretic, it was obvious that with him the fraud had originated.

To prove, beyond all doubt, that the epistle was a forgery, the English prelates who assisted at the Council now produced a document under the seal of the university of Oxford, denying the former to have emanated from them, and condemning the opinions which it favoured. The senate, it set forth, had experienced much grief at finding the errors of Wickliffe so prevalent. They hoped the pious labours of the great Council then assembled would devise means for remedying the evil; and twelve doctors, men of singular learning, had been appointed to arrest its course in England. By their labours, not fewer than two hundred articles had been drawn out of Wickliffe's works, which the university judged worthy to be burnt; but, from their great reverence for the Council, they had sent them to Constance, that they might be dealt with there.

2. The proceedings drew near to a close; the victim was nearly hunted down, and the triumph of the oppressors was at hand. Sigismund, at first reluctant to favour the murderous designs of those who aimed at nothing less than the destruction of the intrepid votary of truth, had now consented

that the safeguard, under which Huss had been induced to appear at Constance, should be disregarded, and nothing remained but to pronounce the atrocious sentence. At this moment Palletz addressed the Council, to assert the purity of his motives in acting as he had done. "I take God to witness," said he, with an air of the greatest possible solemnity, "before the emperor's majesty here present, and before the cardinals and bishops here assembled, that, in the accusation which I have preferred against John Huss, I have been moved by no hatred or ill-will, but have only desired to satisfy the oath which I took when I was made a doctor, to be an enemy to all errors which might affect the profit and well-being of the most holy Catholic Church."

Michael de Causis also disclaimed being animated by personal hatred to Huss, and declared that "he, from first to last, had had no object in view but the good of the church, and the glory of God."

"To the Heavenly Judge of all," said John Huss, with devout animation, "do I refer the decision of these things. He will duly appreciate the cause of quarrel."

The Cardinal of Cambrai thought it right not to allow the proceedings to reach their termination, without taking some favourable notice of Palletz, in

consideration of the really great exertions he had made to destroy a man so obnoxious to a dissolute clergy, as the pure-minded Bohemian; and he accordingly said aloud—

“ I cannot a little commend the humanity and gentleness of Stephen Palletz, for the forbearance and tenderness which he has used in drawing out the articles against the prisoner; for we have heard that there are many things contained in his book, which are much worse and detestable.”

Had the cardinal really believed this to be the case, he would have thought it unnecessary to eulogise Palletz. That wretched man had earned the applause now vouchsafed, by making the worst of what he found, and by pretending to discover what had no existence but in his own malice.

3. The Bishop of Rygen, to whose custody Huss had previously been committed, directed him to be removed; and, attended by guards, he was escorted from the convent to his prison.

4. It might have been hoped, that, after the triumph gained over the opinions of Huss, a high-minded Prince would have thought the moment had at length arrived when mercy might wisely interpose to save his person; and the Council, having condemned—and, it might be presumed, by their sacred authority put down—his heresies for ever, have permitted the humbled reformer to close

his days in unregarded obscurity—at once a monument of their gentleness and their power: but the atmosphere which Sigismund had lately breathed had awaked no such feeling in him; and the Council were strangers to pity. The emperor had imbibed much of the hateful intolerance of those around him; and the base cruelty they were inhumanly disposed to exercise, in revenge for the attacks made by the Bohemian on their profitable vices, the emperor was weakly prepared to commend, in the mean hope of gaining in return their unhallowed prayers and sordid applause. Accordingly, when the devoted victim was withdrawn, Sigismund formally addressed the Council, and declared it to be his conviction that manifold crimes had been proved against Huss, each of which merited death. If, then, he did not speedily recant, he hesitated not to declare, that, in his judgment, he ought to be punished with fire. He recommended, in any case, that he should be restrained from teaching and preaching, and permitted to return to Bohemia no more; as, if he could get back thither, he would not be kept from propagating heresies anew, by any engagement into which he might be induced to enter there. He proposed that all publicity should be given to the articles which had been condemned, in order that the roots of the evil might be destroyed, as well as the

branches; and, finally, he expressed it to be his pleasure, that all who were found at Constance favourable to the opinions of John Huss, and more especially his scholar Jerome, should be speedily pursued, and, if possible, brought to condign punishment.

A speech like this could not fail to win admiration from such an audience. It was pronounced to be a miracle of wisdom and piety; and the Council expressed a conviction that the fate of John Huss would prove a warning to Jerome and others; and there were minds so constructed, as, in this view of the case, to regard the dreadful crime about to be perpetrated as an act of almost God-like charity to mankind at large.

With this declaration, the Council adjourned their proceedings.

5. The Baron de Chlume, whom we have already beheld signalising his regard for Huss under circumstances of difficulty, did not abate his kindness as the clouds gathered, in more appalling darkness, over the betrayed Bohemian. Unhappily, the history of the human race presents comparatively few examples of friendship so noble, so generously warm, yet tempered by such admirable prudence. Exalted above Huss by rank and wealth, it was his pride and happiness to have the minister, whose talents he honoured, and whose virtue

he revered, for his constant companion. He was not of that order of patrons who glory in displaying a man of genius for a day, as a thing at their command—a captive in their train—and, consequently, vastly beneath the possessor of gold. He loved the man, and felt that any advantages he, by his station, could impart, were more than requited by the daily emanations of a heaven-directed mind, rich in human wit and learning. Immediately on the removal of Huss from the presence of the Council, De Chlume followed to his prison, to offer such comfort as a sympathising heart, under circumstances so mournful, could supply. And great, according to the old historian, was the benefit derived by the captive from this noble effort. “No tongue,” says Fox, “can express what a courage and stomach he received by the short talk which he had with him, when, as in so great a broil and grievous hatred, he saw himself, in a manner, forsaken by all men.” De Chlume wished to save the life of a sincerely cherished friend; but life, he felt, might be too dearly purchased; and he did not wish Huss to gain a few additional years, at the expense of his honour, his conscience, and his eternal hope. “If,” he affectionately urged, “the prisoner was convinced that he had erred, no time ought to be lost in making peace with those who held his fate in their hands;

but if, on the contrary, his sentiments remained the same, he conjured him to let no thought of earthly suffering induce him to fail in his paramount duty." This manly and rational language had proper weight with the sufferer. John's heart was not very accessible to common weaknesses, but the "word in season," thus admirably timed, fortified all the approaches to it, and made "assurance doubly sure."

6. How deeply Huss was affected by the kindness of the Baron, appears in many of his letters. His was the mind that could well appreciate a truly generous friend. In writing to some of his countrymen, he burst into the following exclamations, which seem to refer to the scene just mentioned—to the interview which De Chlume obtained with him, immediately after he was withdrawn from the Council, that they might deliberate on what had been proved against him:—

"Oh, how comfortable was the giving of the hand of Lord John de Chlume to me! He was not ashamed to reach forth his hand to me, a wretch, and such an abject heretic, lying in fetters of iron, and cried out upon by all men!"

The baron had his meed. When these words met his sight, how must his heart have rejoiced to know what a flow of comfort he had thrown into the captive's cell! Doubtless he exulted in the re-

collection of it, long after the scattered ashes of that friend had floated on the waters of the Rhine!

But other consolations were not wanting to Huss, in the period which intervened between his mock trial and the fulfilment of his destiny. The language of the Saviour, in his painful progress to Calvary, occurred to him in many cases, and may be said to "have rendered darkness light." The words of consolation addressed by Jesus to his disciples, while they personally surrounded him, were hardly more deeply felt by them, than they were, fourteen centuries afterwards, by his faithful and devoted follower, John Huss. "I love," said he, in the opening of the letter from which a quotation has already been given, "the counsel of the Lord, above gold and precious stones. Wherefore, I trust, in the mercy of Jesus Christ, that he will give me his spirit to stand in his truth." Yet, far from feeling excessive confidence in himself, he adds, "Pray to the Lord, for 'the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'"

And the gloomy cell of the pious Bohemian was cheered by refreshing visions of the future, in which he saw, and not "darkly as through a glass," but clearly as in the blaze of noon, the ultimate triumph of those principles, for which he had already suffered much, and for which he was prepared to lay down his life. His mind was soothed

by the reflection that unborn thousands might profit from his labours ; that, if severe his present visitation, it would not be endured in vain.

7. Of the images which consoled him, we have a lively picture, in a letter addressed to De Chlume. In this he writes—"I pray you interpret to me the dream of this night. I thought that I saw in my church of Bethlehem, they came to remove and put out all the images of Christ, and did put them out. The next day after, it seemed to me that I arose and saw many painters, who painted fairer images, and many more of them, than were there before, which images I was very glad and joyful to behold. And the painters, with many others about them, said, 'Let the bishops and priests come now and put out these pictures if they can.' At this, many people in Bethlehem appeared to rejoice, and I with them ; and, there-upon waking, I could not but laugh." His friend the baron was with Huss of opinion, that this vision was to be understood as shadowing forth, that, though the Pope and his cardinals should extinguish the preaching of the Gospel of Christ in him, yet a time would come when the same doctrine would be revived by others, so powerfully, that all the labours of Rome would not be able to prevail against it. This, he subsequently expressed, was his sincere conviction ; and he scrupled not to declare,

in the spirit of prophecy, that "the things which he had preached under the roof of the house, should in other times be heard above the house-top." He was deeply impressed with the anticipation that the church of God would eventually be reformed; and that, despite of all difficulties and temporary impediments, other ministers and priests would arise, who, hating the avarice and intolerance of those who were then masters of his person, might successfully labour, by the grace and favouring goodness of God, to introduce and establish a new and a better state of things.

But he was not so superior to the ordinary fear of approaching death, as to have no misgivings. While sleeping, some of the scenes presented to him were painful at the moment, and he had the further affliction of learning that they had been speedily realised. Thus, addressing his friends in Bohemia, he tells them—"I have had great conflicts by dreams, in such sort that I could with difficulty refrain from crying out; for I dreamed of the Pope's escape before he went; and after my Lord John had told me thereof, it was made known to me that the Pope should return again. Afterwards I dreamed of the apprehending of Master Jerome, though not in full manner as it was done. The imprisonments I have suffered were indicated to me beforehand, though not with all the attend-

ant circumstances. Many serpents appeared to me, having heads in their tails, but these could not bite me."

8. There were moments, too, in which his thoughts were interrupted, not by the "unreal mockery" of visions of the night, but by the presence of a perfidious friend, or, rather, of a merciless enemy, by day. He writes to his friends in the letter mentioned above—

"Palletz came to me in prison. His salutation, seeing my extreme infirmity before the Commissioners, was this—'that there had not risen a more perilous heretic since Christ was born, than was Wickliffe and I.' He also said that all such as came to hear my talk were infected with this heresy,—to think that the substance of bread remained in the sacrament of the altar. To him I thus answered:—'O master! what a grievous salutation have you given me! and how greatly do you sin! Behold I shall die; peradventure to-morrow shall be burnt; and what reward will await you in Bohemia, as a recompense for your labour?'"

The cardinals were eager to destroy, but the emperor still wished to subdue the Bohemian. This was the object of the harsh language which he had addressed to Huss in prison. If, in a moment of exasperation, he afterwards seemed animated by the merciless spirit of those who formed the ma-

majority of the Council, he had still a natural shrinking from, and a perception of, the obloquy that must attach to his name, if Huss were consigned to the flames. In conformity with his wish, a form of retraction was drawn up, which was carefully worded so as not to give unnecessary offence. But, though fair in language, as it involved a denial of those great truths, in maintaining which he was resolved to live and die, Huss could not be prevailed upon to give it his signature; and, firm to his purpose, he avowed that he felt it incumbent on him to afford an example, in his own conduct, of that enduring patience which he had so frequently preached to others. All solicitations on the subject proved unavailing. His books were burned, by the emperor's command. This, which he might regard as the precursor of his own fate, it was expected would alarm, but it seemed to give him no concern; and he calmly remarked that "the books of the Prophet Jeremiah had been dealt with in the same way, but their immortal contents still remained to enlighten mankind."

9. While these inhuman experiments were made on the constancy of a pious follower of Jesus, Constance was the scene of revelry and mirth. Tournaments were occasionally given, and, in some of these, blood was shed. The sacrifice of life, however, does not appear to have been

followed by the gloom of mourning. The Earl of Warwick, having received a challenge from a person of high rank, killed him in justing. This achievement so delighted the empress of Sigismund, that, in honour of the earl's valour, she took the boar, his impress, from the shoulders of one of his attendants, and wore it herself in public. The incident led to another not less remarkable. Flattered by the compliment from so high a personage, Warwick had the gallantry to cause the device to be worked in precious stones, which she graciously accepted.

10. The emperor, in acknowledgment of his worth, presented him with the heart of England's champion, "thrice-renowned St. George," which he wished him to carry home. This honour the earl declined, but represented that as the emperor intended visiting England, how much the value of a relic so sacred would be enhanced from presentation to his sovereign by imperial hands; and, in consequence of the suggestion, when the emperor came to this country it was brought by him in great form to King Henry, who received it with much satisfaction. It was with all due solemnity deposited in Westminster Abbey, and there regarded, both by the monarch and his people, as an object entitled to profound veneration.

A month wore away, and still the intrepid Huss

languished in a noisome prison. To repeated invitations to recant, he had opposed a firm refusal. The Council were fully prepared to condemn, but the emperor hesitated. A final effort to get over his obstinacy was at length resolved upon, and, on the 5th of July, a deputation waited on him from Sigismund—for the last time—to require him to abjure those articles to which he had owned, and to swear in other matters to adhere to the established doctrine of the church. The emperor had hopes, that, as he was no longer called upon to recant opinions which he denied to have been his, Huss might now take a course that would satisfy the cardinals and bishops. But that could not be. The prisoner, as he would not renounce principles which were never his, was not less determined never to abandon opinions which he had maintained, and which had not been refuted on the authority of the Bible; and he humbly, but firmly as before, gave this answer to those who waited on him from Sigismund.

11. The deputation had consisted of four bishops, and to these Wencelate de Dubar and the Baron de Chlume were joined, in order that the exertions of friendship might not be wanting in that important moment. The interview was most memorable and most affecting. De Chlume, as in all the previous scenes, acted a glorious part, and

omitted no effort that conscience would permit him to use, to bend the sturdy resolution of the sufferer. "I," said he, "am a man unlearned, and unable to counsel you, a man of learning and understanding; nevertheless, I call on you, if you know yourself guilty of any of the errors imputed by the Council, not to be ashamed to alter your resolution, and bow to their will; but contrariwise, I will not ask you to do aught against your conscience, but rather to endure any punishment than deny what you have known to be the truth."

This affecting appeal was not lost upon Huss, who, bursting into tears, replied—"I now, as I have oftentimes done, take the most high God for my witness, that I am ready, with my whole heart and mind, if the Council can instruct or teach me better by the holy scriptures, to change my opinion with all my heart."

"And are you," asked one of the bishops, "so arrogant and all-sufficient, that you can prefer your own thought to the solemn decision and judgment of the whole Council?"

"Not so," Huss answered: "let the meanest of the whole body prove me to have been in error, and I will, with all humility, do whatever the Council may enjoin."

Such language was characterised by the bishop as another instance of obstinacy and dissimulation;

and he and his companions withdrew to report to the emperor the continued stubbornness of the prisoner, and the consequent failure of their efforts to save him from his impending fate. De Chlume's voice was still in favour of mercy, but it could not be of avail.

Nothing remained but to proceed to the last awful step. Huss was well aware of his situation; he knew that from the cardinals he had no mercy to expect, and that their vengeance would not be long delayed. He indeed seems to have felt some surprise that the termination of the drama had not been more speedily pressed; but for that he piously accounted, and thus expressed himself:—"God," said he, "in his wisdom hath reasons for thus long sparing my life; he wishes to give me time to weep for my sins, and to console myself in this protracted trial by the hope of their remission. He hath granted me this interval, that, through meditation on the sufferings of Jesus Christ, I may become better qualified to support my own." He felt that the sand of his glass was very nearly run, and wished no moment of what remained to him of life to pass unimproved. How unmoved—how collected this brave servant of Heaven remained at that trying moment, the following very remarkable letter will show. It was addressed to an old friend and countryman; and, besides kindly admonishing him

against coveting wealth, and exposing himself to the temptation which worldly pleasures hold out to the most virtuous, he calmly reviews his own past career, the vanities in which he had indulged, and the follies which led his mind astray in early life. Then, looking at his actual situation, he proceeds to bequeath his little property to esteemed friends or faithful servants. While his thoughts, occupied with a great and glorious hope, soared above the world for himself, his affections turned with kindly care to those whom he had loved, and who were to remain behind. He thus pictured what was passing in his mind:—

12. “Master Martin, my dear brother in Christ, I exhort you in the Lord that you fear God, keep his commandments, fly the company of women, and beware of hearing their confessions, lest, by their hypocrisy, Satan deceive you. Trust not their devotions. You know how I have detested the avarice and the inordinate life of the clergy, wherefore, through the grace of God, I now suffer persecution, which shortly shall be consummated in me. Nor do I fear to have my heart’s blood poured out in the name of Jesus Christ. I desire you heartily that you be not greedy in seeking after benefices, but, if you should be called to any cure in the country, let the honour of God, the salvation of souls, and the labour thereof, be your object, and not the liv-

ing and the advantages. If you should be placed in any such benefice, beware that you have no young woman for your cook or servant, lest you edify and increase more your house than your soul. See that you be a builder of your spiritual house, being gentle to the poor, and humble of mind, and waste not your goods in great fare. I fear, also, if you do not amend your life, ceasing to wear costly and superfluous apparel, you may be grievously chastised, as I, also, wretched man! must be punished, who, being seduced by the custom of evil men, have done the like. Thus indulging in worldly glory, I have sinned against God in the spirit of pride. As you have known both my preaching and outward conversation, even from my youth, I have no occasion to write many things to you, but to desire you, for the love of Jesus Christ, that you do not follow me in any of the levities that you have seen. You know how, before my priesthood, I have delighted ofttime to play at chess, and have neglected more important things, which grieveth me now, and thereby have unhappily provoked both myself and others to anger by that play; wherefore, besides other of my numerous transgressions, I desire you to invoke the mercy of the Lord, that he will deign to pardon me, and so to direct my life, that, having overcome the wickedness of this state of existence, the flesh,

the world, and the devil, I may find a place in the heavenly country at the day of judgment. Fare you well, in Christ Jesus, with all those who keep his holy law. My grey coat, if you will, keep to yourself for my remembrance. But I think you will be ashamed to wear that grey colour, therefore you may give it to whom you shall think good. My white coat you shall give the minister N, my scholar. To George, or else to Zuzikon, sixty groats, or else my grey coat, for he has faithfully served me."

This was in fact the will of Huss. He seems to have been reluctant that it should be known how little he had to leave; at least, he was anxious, in the event of his life being spared, that the disposition of his property made in the above letter should be concealed; for he added to the superscription these words: "I pray you that you do not open this letter before you be sure and certain of my death."

Such cares, it may appear to some, were beneath a spirit so exalted. He felt, while for himself his whole mind was fixed on eternity, that those who were dear to him, and had yet to struggle in this world, could not so divorce themselves from the things of time, as to soar above the natural wants of the creature. His benevolence was awake to those wants, in the case of his friends, from which

the savage treatment to which he was subjected had relieved him. What stronger evidence could be afforded of his kindly nature, than the lively interest which he took in the well-being of others? This could hardly have been felt by a selfish man, but the pious Bohemian had never lived for himself alone.

CHAPTER XX.

CLOSE OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL AGAINST
JOHN HUSS.

1. Last appearance of John Huss before the Council.—2. Preparations to degrade him.—3. Sermon of blood.—4. Huss again attempts to obtain a patient hearing, but in vain.—5. He is sentenced to be degraded.—6. His prayer to the Almighty treated with derision.

DEEPLY as all must commiserate the barbarous usage John Huss experienced from his fellow-men, who can read his story without feeling consoled, while he admires that unconquerable spirit, which sustaining faith, and a lively confidence in the promises of God, as recorded in the Bible, supplied, to carry him through the last dreary scenes of his pilgrimage?

1. The day following that on which the deputies went to him from the emperor, Saturday the 6th of July, was fixed upon for the completion of the tragedy. A general session was appointed of the cardinals, bishops, and other great personages, in the cathedral church of Constance; and, to render

the scene more august, the emperor presided in person. His appearance is described as not a little imposing. He was then in the full vigour of life, in his forty-sixth year. His stature was tall, his countenance handsome, he wore his hair curling and his beard long, and his whole presence was most graceful and majestic. He, we are informed on the same authority, had much wit and vivacity, was master of several languages, and flattery scrupled not to honour him as one of the wisest of the sons of men. He took his seat wearing his imperial robes, and surrounded by every circumstance of judicial pomp, that might serve to render the spectacle strikingly magnificent at the moment, and celebrated for ever.

2. In the middle of the church, a square wooden platform had been erected, with a desk, on which the vestments of a priest were laid. The object of placing them there was, that John Huss might assume them preparatory to being ignominiously degraded from his rank in the church, before he should be given over to the civil power. The prisoner was brought forward in solemn form. He saw the arrangements which had been made, and, well aware of what was intended, on approaching the platform fell on his knees, and in that posture, as if unconscious that any human eye rested on him, raised his thoughts to the Author of his being, and

prayed that he might be strengthened to go through the fearful ordeal which awaited him. Huss was thus engaged, when the Bishop of Lodi ascended the pulpit. He preached a sermon, which was deemed by the cardinals and bishops a most godly and appropriate discourse, but which, for perversion of scripture, for cruelty, and for mean sycophancy, stands eminently distinguished. In these respects, indeed, it perhaps stands second to no similar effort on record. It deserves to be perpetuated, to the author's eternal shame, and we therefore transcribe that sermon of blood. It ran thus:—

3. “ In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, trusting, by humble invocation, upon the Divine help and aid, most noble prince and most Christian emperor, and you, most excellent fathers, and reverend lords, bishops, and prelates; also, most excellent doctors and masters, most famous and noble dukes, and high counts; honourable nobles and barons, and all other men worthy of remembrance,—that the intent and purpose of my mind may the more plainly and evidently appear to this most sacred congregation, I am first of all determined to treat or speak of that which is read in the epistle on the next Sunday, in the sixth chapter of the Romans, that is to say, ‘ Let the body of sin be destroyed.’ It appeareth by the authority of Aristotle, in his book *De Cælo et Mundo*, how wicked,

dangerous, and foolish a matter it seemeth to be, not to withstand perverse and wicked beginnings, for he saith that a small error in the beginning is greater in the end. It is very damnable and dangerous to have error, but more hard to be corrected or amended; whereupon that worthy doctor St. Jerome, in his book, by the exposition of the Catholic faith, teacheth us how necessary a thing it is that heretics and heresies should be suppressed, and at the first beginning of them, saying thus:— ‘The rotten and dead flesh to be cut from the body, lest that the whole body should perish and putrify. For a scabby sheep is to be put out of the fold, lest the whole flock be infected.’ A little fire is to be quenched, lest the whole house should be consumed and burnt. Arius was first a spark in Alexandria, who, because he was not at the first quenched, presumed and went about, with his wicked and perverse imaginations and fantastical inventions, to spot and defile the Catholic faith, which is founded and established by Christ, defended with the victorious triumphs of so many martyrs, and illuminated and set forth with the excellent doctrine and witnesses of so many men. Such, therefore, must be resisted, —such heretics must be suppressed and condemned.

“Wherefore, I have truly proposed, as touching the punishment of every such obstinate heretic, that the body of sin is to be destroyed. Where-

upon, it is to be considered, according to the holy tradition of the fathers, that some sins are adverse and contrary to others; others are annexed or compounded together; other some are, as it were, branches and members of others. Some are, it may be said, roots and heads of others. Amongst all, those are to be considered the most detestable out of which the most and worst have their original and beginning. Therefore, albeit that all sins and offences are to be abhorred of us, yet those are especially to be eschewed which are the head and root of the rest; for by how much the perverseness of them is of more force and power to hurt, with so much the more speed and circumspection ought they to be rooted out and extinguished, without preservations or remedies. Forasmuch, then, as amongst all sins, none doth more appear to be inveterate than the mischief of this most execrable schism, therefore have I right well propounded that 'the body of sin should be destroyed.' For, by the long continuance of this schism, great and most cruel destruction is sprung up amongst the faithful, and has long continued; abominable divisions and heresies are grown, threatenings are increased and multiplied, the confusion of the whole clergy is growing thereupon, and the opprobriums and slanders of the Christian people are abundantly sprung up and increased. And truly it is no marvel,

forasmuch as that most execrable and detestable schism is, as it were, a body and heap of dissolution of the true faith of God; for what can be good or holy in that place where such a pestiferous schism has reigned for so long a time? For, as St. Bernard saith,—‘ Like as, in the unity and concord of the faithful, there is the habitation and dwelling of the Lord; so likewise, in the schism and dissipation of the Christians, there is made the habitation and dwelling of the devil.’ Is not schism and division the original of all subversion, the den of heresies, and the nourisher of all offences? for, the knot of unity and peace being once troubled and broken, there is a free passage for all strife and debate. Covetousness in oaths for lucre’s sake, lust and will are set at liberty, and all means furnished that tend to slaughter. All right and equity are banished, the ecclesiastical power is injured, and the calamity of this schism brings in all kinds of discord; the sword and violence prevail, the laity have the dominion, concord and unity are banished, and all prescribed rules of religion set at nought.

“ Remember, most gentle lords, during this most pestiferous schism, how many heretics have appeared and escaped unpunished; how many churches have been spoiled and pulled down; how many cities have been oppressed and regions brought

to ruin; what confusion has been created among the clergy; how great the destruction among the Christian people! I pray you, mark how the church of God—the spouse of Christ, and the mother of all the faithful—is contemned and despised; for who now doth reverence the keys of the church? who feareth the censures or laws? who will defend the liberties thereof? or, rather, who is not prepared to offend the same, to invade it, and even to lay violent hands on the heritage of Jesus Christ? The goods of the clergy and the poor, and the relief of pilgrims and strangers, brought together by the precious blood of the Saviour and of many martyrs, are spoiled and taken away. Behold the abomination of the desolation brought upon the church of God, the destruction of the true faith, and the confusion of Christian people, to the ruin of the Lord's flock or fold, and all the whole company of our most holy Redeemer. This last is much more great and grievous than any that could happen to the martyrs of Christ, and this persecution much more cruel than that of any tyrant, for in such cases the body only could suffer; by this schism, the immortal soul is tormented. Then, the blood of man was only shed; but in this case, the true faith is overthrown. That persecution was salvation to many, but this schism is destruction to all men. While the tyrants raged, the

faith increased ; but by this division, it is utterly destroyed. During their cruelty and madness, the primitive church increased ; but through this schism, it is confounded and overthrown. Tyrants ignorantly offended ; but here, many willingly and wittingly, from obstinacy, offend. Heretics, users of simony, and hypocrites, have been brought in, to the great detriment of the church ; under the former exercise of tyranny, the merits of the just were increased.

“During this schism, mischief and wickedness are augmented ; for, in this most cursed and execrable division, truth is made an enemy to all Christians, faith is not regarded, love and charity hated, hope lost, and justice overthrown ; no courage or valour but such as sought evil ; modesty and temperance choked, wisdom turned into deceit, humility feigned, equity falsified, patience fled, all intended devotion counted folly, obedience not regarded, and all manner of life led the most reproachful and abominable. With how great and grievous sorrows is the church of God filled and overwhelmed, while tyrants oppress it, heretics invade it, users of simony do despoil and rob it, and schismatics go about utterly to subvert it. O ! most miserable and wretched Christian people, who now, for the space of forty years, with such hardened and continued schism, have almost been brought to ruin !

O! the little bark and ship of Christ, which hath so long wandered and strayed into the middle of the whirlpools, and by and by will stick fast on the rocks, tossed to and fro with most grievous and tempestuous storms! O! miserable and wretched boat of Peter! if the most holy Father would suffer thee to sink or drown, into what dangers and perils have the wicked pirates brought thee! amongst what rocks have they placed thee! O! most godly and loving Christians, what faithful devout man is there, who, beholding the ruin which has fallen on the church, would not be moved even to tears? What good conscience can refrain from weeping, because that contention and strife are poured upon the ecclesiastical rulers, which have caused them to err, because they have not found, or, rather, would not find, the way of unity and concord, whereupon so much confusion and sorrow has been thrown into the flock of Peter and the fold of our Lord.

“ Many princes, kings, and prelates have greatly laboured for the rooting out thereof, but yet could they never bring about that most necessary work; wherefore, most Christian monarch, this most glorious and triumphant victory has tarried only for thee,—the crown and glory thereof shall be thine for ever and ever. It shall be continually celebrated to thy great honour and praise, that thou

hast restored the church that was so spoiled,—that thou hast removed and put away all inveterate and overgrown schisms and differences. Thou hast trodden down users of simony, and rooted out all heretics. Dost thou not behold and feel how great, perpetual, and famous renown and glory it will be unto thee? For what can be more just, what more holy, what better, what more to be desired, or, finally, what can be more acceptable to the Eternal, than to root out this wicked and abominable schism, to restore the church to her ancient liberty, to extinguish and put away all simony, and to condemn and destroy all errors and heresies among the flock of the faithful? Nothing, truly, can be better, nothing more holy, nothing more profitable to the whole world, and, finally, nothing more pleasing unto God. For the performance of which most pious work, thou most elect and chosen of God, thou wast first deputed and chosen in heaven, before thou wast elected and chosen upon earth. Thou wast first appointed by the Celestial and Heavenly Prince, before the electors of the empire did elect and choose thee, and specially that, by thy imperial force and power, thou shouldest condemn and destroy those errors and heresies which we have now in hand to be condemned and subverted. To the performance of this most holy work, God hath given unto thee the knowledge

and understanding of his divine truth and verity, power of princely majesty, and the just judgment of equity and righteousness, as the Most Highest himself doth say, ' I have given thee understanding and wisdom, to speak and to utter my words, and have set thee to rule over nations and kingdoms,' that thou shouldest help the people, pluck down and destroy iniquity, and, by exercising of justice, I say, thou shouldest destroy all errors and heresies, and especially this obstinate heretic here present, through whose wickedness and mischief many places are infected with most pestilent and heretical poison, and by his means almost utterly subverted and destroyed. This most holy and godly labour, O ! most noble prince, was reserved only for thee ; upon thee it doth only lie, unto whom the whole rule and administration of justice is given. By this great act hast thou established thy fame and renown, even by the mouths of infants and sucking babes, for thy praises shall be celebrated for evermore, that thou hast destroyed and overthrown such and so great enemies of the faith. The which that thou mayest prosperously and happily perform and bring to pass, may our Lord Jesus Christ vouchsafe to grant thee his grace and help, who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen."

4. This outrage on religion concluded, the procurer or attorney-general of the Council, Henry de

Piro, rose, and moved that the process against the prisoner might be continued, and the definitive sentence pronounced. The former proceedings were recited, and, as they were gone over, Huss offered to remark on passages in which he was misrepresented. He was, however, checked; and the Cardinal of Cambrai authoritatively ordered him to hold his peace then, but added, he might, when the reading was concluded, speak to the points in which he felt aggrieved. Situated as he was, with no one to assist him in his distress, Huss ventured to represent that such permission could be of no avail, as it would be impossible for him to remember them all. Of this complaint the cardinal made very light, saying the Council had already heard quite enough of him; and that was deemed a good and sufficient answer to a man who begged to explain himself with regard to falsely imputed doctrines, for holding which it was proposed forthwith to doom him to a dreadful death!

Huss persisted in craving a patient hearing, but his representations were not attended to, and, unable to obtain justice from his fellow-men, as before he earnestly appealed to God, and to the Saviour of man, Jesus Christ.

To all that he had been previously accused of, an article was now added, declaring him to have spoken of a fourth divinity. This was stated by

his judges to be alleged on the authority of an eminent doctor, whose name Huss instantly demanded, while he earnestly declared that such an opinion he had never promulgated. The name of his accuser in this instance was withheld, as unnecessary to be communicated. The injustice of his judges deeply affected him, and in the agony of his heart he exclaimed, "Miserable and wretched man that I am! thus doomed to be slandered, and accused, and by an unseen enemy, of such horrible blasphemy!"

On the article being repeated, describing him as contumacious, for having formerly appealed from the Pope to Christ, he once more raised his voice to the Eternal Governor of all the earth, and called on Him to judge of the integrity of his heart. To the Council he then addressed his speech, denying that he had been in contempt, as his proctor had appeared for him at Rome, but, in two years, was unable to obtain a hearing, and he had now come to Constance, of his own free will, to answer for his conduct, and clear himself of all that had been alleged against him.

Little attention was paid to his explanation. The great assembly before which he stood, had met on that day, not to listen, but to condemn. They considered that further deliberation or inquiry would be but a waste of time, and, silence first commanded,—

5. The following definitive sentence was read :—

“The most holy and sacred General Council of Constance being congregated together, representing the Catholic Church, for a perpetual memory of that which truth doth witness, as an evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit, thence it cometh that the man of most damnable memory, John Wickliffe, through his pestiferous doctrine, not through Jesus Christ by the gospel, as the holy fathers have in time past begotten faithful children, but, contrary to the wholesome faith of Jesus Christ, as a most venomous root, hath begotten many pestilent and wicked children, whom he hath left behind him, successors and followers of his perverse and wicked doctrine, against whom this sacred synod of Constance is forced to rise up, as against bastards and unlawful children, and, with diligent care, with the sharp knife of ecclesiastical authority, to cut up their errors out of the Lord’s field, as most hurtful brambles and briars, lest they should grow to the hurt and detriment of others.

“Forasmuch, then, as in the holy General Council, lately held and celebrated at Rome, it was decreed that the doctrine of John Wickliffe, of most damnable memory, should be condemned, and that his books, which contained the said doctrine, should be burnt as heretical, and this decree having been approved and confirmed by the sacred

authority of the whole Council, nevertheless, one John Huss, here personally present, not the disciple of Jesus Christ, but of John Wickliffe, an arch-heretic, after, and contrary to, the condemnation or decree, hath taught, preached, and affirmed the articles of Wickliffe, which were condemned by the church of God, and, in times past, by certain most reverend fathers in Christ, lords archbishops and bishops of divers kingdoms and nations, masters of divinity of divers universities, especially resisting, in his open sermons, and also with his adherents and accomplices in the schools, the condemnation of the said articles of Wickliffe, oftentimes published in the said university of Prague, and hath declared him, the said Wickliffe, for the favour and commendation of his doctrine before the whole multitude of the clergy and people, to be a Catholic man, and a true evangelical doctor. He hath also published and affirmed certain and many of his articles, worthily condemned, to be catholic, the which are notoriously contained in the books of the said John Huss.

“ Wherefore, after diligent deliberation, on full information first had upon the premises, by the reverend fathers and lords in Christ of the holy church of Rome, cardinals, patriarchs, and archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, and doctors of divinity, and of both laws, in great number assem-

bled, this most sacred and holy Council of Constance declareth and determineth the articles above said, the which, after due conference, have been found in his books written with his own hand, (the which, also, the said John Huss, in open audience before this holy Council, hath confessed to be in his books), not to be Catholic, neither worthy to be taught, but that many of them are erroneous, some of them wicked, others offensive to godly ears, many of them to be temerarious and seditious, and the greater part of them notoriously heretical, and even now of late, by the holy fathers and General Councils, reprovèd and condemned. And forasmuch as the said articles are expressly contained in the books of John Huss, therefore, this said sacred Council doth condemn and reprove all those books which he wrote, in what form or phrase soever they may be, or whether they be translated by others; and doth determine and decree, that they all shall be solemnly and openly burned, in the presence of the clergy and people of the city of Constance, or elsewhere: adding, moreover, that all his doctrine is worthy to be despised and eschewed of all faithful Christians; and to the intent that this most pernicious and wicked doctrine may be utterly excluded and shut out of the church, this sacred synod doth straightly command that diligent inquisition be

made by the ordinaries of the places, for such treatises and works, and that such as are found be consumed and burnt with fire. And, if there be any found that shall contemn or despise this sentence and decree, this sacred synod ordaineth and decreeth that the ordinaries of the places shall proceed against every such person as suspected of heresy.

“ Whereupon, after due inquisition made against the said John Huss, and full information had by the commissioners and doctors of both laws, and also by the sayings of witnesses worthy of credit, and many other things openly read before the said John Huss, and before the fathers and prelates of this sacred Council (by the which allegations of the witnesses it appeareth that the said John Huss hath taught many evil and offensive, seditious and perilous heresies, and for a long time), this most sacred and holy synod, lawfully congregated and gathered together in the Holy Ghost, the name of Christ being invoked and called upon, by this their sentence, which is here set forth in writing, determineth, pronounceth, declareth, and decreeth, that John Huss was and is a true and manifest heretic, and that he hath preached openly errors and heresies lately condemned by the church of God, and many other seditious, temerarious, and offensive things, to the no small offence of the Divine Ma-

jesty and of the universal church, and to the detriment of the Catholic faith; and at the same time the church neglecting, despising the keys of the church and ecclesiastical censure. In these errors he continued, with a mind altogether indurated and hardened, for the space of many years, much offending faithful Christians by his obstinacy and stubbornness, when he made his appeal, as he has here openly declared, to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the most high Judge, omitting and leaving all ecclesiastical means; in the which appeal he alleged many false, injurious, and offensive matters, in contempt of the apostolic see and the ecclesiastical censure and keys.

“Whereupon, both for the premises and many other things, the said synod pronounceth John Huss to be a heretic, and judgeth him by these presents to be a heretic, and reproveth the said appeal as injurious, offensive, and done in derision of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and judgeth the said John Huss, not only to have seduced the Christian people by his writings and preachings, and failed to be—especially in the kingdom of Bohemia—a true preacher of the gospel of Christ, but also to have been a seducer of the people, and also an obstinate and stiffnecked person; yea, and such a one as doth not desire to return to the lap of our most holy mother the church, neither to abjure the

heresies which he hath openly preached and defended; and, therefore, this most sacred Council decreeth and declareth that the said John Huss shall be famously deposed and degraded from his priestly orders and dignity."

While the sentence was being read, Huss repeatedly protested against parts of it. He denied that he was guilty of stubbornness; and, far from countenancing error, would willingly, if it depended on him, put it down for ever, at any labour, expense, or peril to himself. His books, he maintained, were unjustly denounced by those who knew little of their contents.

Had the sentence meant no more than it expressed—had the Council been content with depriving him of his rank in the church,—though unjust, the proceeding might not have been deemed immeasurably severe; but it was well understood that this was but a preliminary to a most cruel bodily punishment; and that the Council, in degrading, virtually doomed him to suffer at the stake. Huss knew this. When the sentence was pronounced, he felt that his fate was irrevocably sealed. Again he sank on his knees, and addressed himself to that quarter where alone he could hope to be heard with favour and mercy.

6. "Forgive, forgive, Lord Jesus Christ!" he exclaimed, "my bitter enemies, by whom thou

knowest I am falsely accused. They have employed corrupt witnesses and slanders against me; but forgive them, I pray, for thy great mercy's sake, which no tongue can express, nor avenge on them my cruel wrongs!"

This Christian supplication was regarded by the cardinals and bishops with the most profound contempt. It provoked something like an expression of mirth, so extravagant did it seem that a condemned heretic should, for a moment, affect to imagine that a prayer of his could be heard, or attended to, by the Father of all.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MARTYRDOM OF JOHN HUSS.

1. The sentence of degradation carried into effect.—2. Outrageous insults offered by the bishops.—3. Huss is handed over to the civil power.—4. Preparations for putting him to death.—5. His books burnt.—6. Psalms quoted by Huss on his way to the stake.—7. His cheerful and resigned deportment in his last moments.—8. He is burnt to ashes.—9. Shame of the Emperor Sigismund.

No further pause was allowed. The insulted Majesty of Heaven was forthwith to be signally avenged. The natural feelings of the human heart, which would prompt compassion even for a fallen sinner, were quenched in the flood of infuriated bigotry which there prevailed. Seven reverend prelates were selected to carry into effect the sentence which the Council had pronounced, and they now stood forth, nothing loth, to perform the part assigned to them. With a view to degrade Huss from the priesthood, he was ordered to clothe himself in garments provided for that purpose. He submissively obeyed their bidding. On assuming

the alb, or surplice, he likened it to the white robe which Herod caused Jesus Christ to wear. In all his troubles, he had constantly in mind the sufferings of the Redeemer, in comparison with which, he considered his own such as might easily be borne. The name of the Saviour was unceasingly in his mouth; his merits and love for sinful men were never absent from his thoughts; and, thus comforted, his courage, in the most trying moments, rose with the danger, and soared above the raging malice and affected piety of his merciless enemies.

Attired in the vestments of a priest, he was again required to abjure his errors, and reminded that safety, profit, and honour, would be the instant consequences of compliance. This pretended charity moved him more than the severity which he had previously encountered; and tears filled his eyes. At the moment, he made no answer; but, ascending the scaffold which had been erected in the church, he thus gave vent to his agonized feelings:—

“The lords cardinals and bishops here assembled, counsel me to confess, before you all, that I have erred; could I obey them, and only expose myself to infamy and reproach from man, I might, probably, be soon persuaded to do it. But I cannot, seeing that I now stand in the presence of the Lord my God, without whose great dishonour, and

grudge of my own conscience, I may not attempt the thing that is required. Well do I know that I never have taught those things which are cruelly ascribed to me, but have always preached, taught, and written the contrary. With what countenance, then, could I look on the heavens above—with what face could I look on those whom I have instructed, if, through my faltering, it should come to pass that those things which they have hitherto known to be most sure and certain, should, from my being reported to have made recantation, now be made uncertain? Ought I, by acting such a part, to astonish and trouble so many souls, so many consciences, up to this moment endowed with the most firm and real knowledge of the scriptures, and of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his most pure doctrine, and armed against all the assaults of Satan? Never will I do it—never will I commit such an offence, that I shall seem to value more this unworthy body, appointed unto death, than their soul's health and eternal salvation."

Imagination can picture nothing more nobly ingenuous, more rich in just reasoning, or more faithful to duty, than the spirit which shone forth in the words of the dying martyr. It was not to gratify a vain pride, nor was it to gain the plaudits of a thoughtless multitude, that he braved the

malice which he knew would consign him to the flames, but because he felt in his heart that, if he took that course which promised to shield him from present danger, he might compromise the eternal safety of many whom he confidently hoped were, through his instrumentality, in the road to everlasting glory.

The crowd of spectators to whom he spoke listened in sympathising silence, but the Council manifested anew the disdain in which they held his opinions. His last declaration they regarded as an instance of hardened obstinacy, which could not be too severely visited, in this world or the next. He was sternly ordered to quit the platform, and receive the execution of his sentence. Still wearing the dress of a priest, he complied with the mandate, and descended to the floor of the church. He had not yet left the steps, when one of the bishops snatched a chalice from his hand, which had been given to him with the garments he had been forced to wear, and at the same time exclaimed,—

“ Oh! thou cursed Judas! why hast thou forsaken the counsel and ways of peace, to consort with the Jews? We take away from thee this chalice of thy salvation.”

“ But I trust,” said Huss, whose courage was increased as the treatment he met with became more gross and intolerable, “ that God the Father

Omnipotent, and his son my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for whose sake I do suffer these revilings, will not take away the chalice of his redemption; and I have, even now, a firm and steadfast hope that this day I shall drink thereof in his kingdom."

Such presence of mind astonished all, even those who affected to regard his impenitence with horror. The remaining six bishops, appointed in this stage of his martyrdom to act as executioners, then proceeded, severally, to snatch from his person the vestments he had assumed, preparatory to this scene, and each, as he did so, breathed a curse on the dying man. This ruffianly violence disturbed not the tranquillity of Huss. Their blasphemous outrages he declared he was content to endure for his sake who had died on the cross to accomplish man's redemption. Some dispute arose among the persecutors as to the manner in which they should deal with his shaven crown, and, upon that, Huss calmly remarked to the emperor, that "it was singular, seeing that they were all of the same cruel mind and stomach, that they could not agree among themselves what peculiar infliction would be fittest." It was at length declared that the tonsure should be removed or defaced with a pair of shears. These were accordingly used to raise the skin of his head; and, this ceremony completed,

it was announced that the church had taken away all her ornaments and privileges from him, and nothing remained but that he should be delivered over to the civil power.

Their performance closed with a display which was not less mean and puerile, than it was vengeful. A large paper cap was produced, on which three devils were painted, surmounted by the word "Heresiarcha." This, which it was intended he should wear, he regarded with perfect indifference. "My Lord Jesus Christ," said he, "wore for my sake a crown of thorns, and why should I grieve to wear a light cap for his, however ignominious it may be made to appear: I will do it, and that willingly."

It was placed on his head, and, that done, one of the sanctified dignitaries engaged in this important work, marked his zeal in the cause of the holy Catholic Church, if not his charity, by accompanying the act with the words "Hereby we commit thy soul to the devil!"

Huss heard the reprobate speech. He probably pitied the heartless sinner who breathed it. "And I," said he, raising his hands and eyes, "commit my spirit into thy hands, O! Lord Jesus Christ! Unto thee do I commend that spirit, which thou hast redeemed by thy blood!"

Here again it will be remarked how full his

heart was of heavenly contemplation. The sublime example of Jesus was incessantly mingled with his meditations, and the coarse brutal folly, which the cardinals expected would wound, was a subject of exultation ; it reminded him of the sufferings which Christ had encountered to work out the salvation of sinners ; and he wished to regard as gentle forbearance on the part of his tormentors, or rather as a merciful interposition from above, the feelings which suggested to their malice, at that moment, merely the ridiculous idea of compelling him to wear a grotesque paper cap. The last insult that hatred could imagine, and folly offer, had been endured, and nothing remained but to close the business of the day with murder.

3. The bishops, who had completed the atrocious task which they thought it an honour to perform, then turned to Sigismund, and announced that John Huss no longer remained a member of the church ; and the most holy synod, having degraded him from his priestly office, had nothing left to do in regard to the wretched heretic, but to hand him over to justice, by placing him in the custody of the civil authorities of the place.

This was part of the ceremonial previously arranged. Ludovico Duke of Bavaria was present, in his ducal state dress, holding the golden apple in one hand, and the cross in the other ; and to his

keeping, Huss was delivered. The emperor commanded Ludovico to receive the prisoner, and deliver him into safe hands, that, for the heresies of which he stood convicted, he might be forthwith led to execution.

Now arrived the dread moment which was to subject the courage of the martyr to the last fearful test. Pardon, safety, and worldly honour, were before him on the one hand ; on the other, reproach, ignominy, and a death of torture. Now was it to be decided whether frail mortality should sink before the accumulated horrors which bloodthirsty persecutors had prepared for the annihilation of his suffering frame, already bowed by sickness, long imprisonment, and anxious cares ; or whether the spirit of truth should sustain those opinions which a sense of duty had prompted him to promulgate and defend. Huss, as has before been shown, was not a hairbrained enthusiast, who aspired to the glory of martyrdom for itself. He desired to live, and had made every effort in his power to preserve life, short of sinning against his conscience by betraying the cause of God. He could not dismiss from his mind the recollection that many who had attended his preachings in Bethlehem and elsewhere, and had, by his expositions of the scriptures, been brought into the way of salvation, would be for ever thrown on a sea of doubt, if, under any cir-

cumstances, he forsook the opinions he had long professed. It was not, therefore, merely a question of individual degradation that he had to consider, but the high responsibility which devolved upon him, for the immortal welfare of hundreds and thousands whom he had taught, that rendered it his imperative duty not to abate one jot of all that he had heretofore maintained, however dreadful the immediate consequences of this determination must prove to himself.

4. To common minds, his situation, degraded in public as he had been, and placed in the hands of those who were about to burn him to ashes, must appear most deplorable. But an unseen arm sustained him through "the valley of the shadow of death;" and the "still small voice" of conscience diffused a satisfied joyfulness over his mind, lifted him above the appalling circumstances which were expected to subdue his fortitude, and, instead of sinking like a criminal before the instruments of punishment, his feelings burst forth in exultation at the last moment, as if he regarded the fires which were to surround his devoted form, but as the chariot of Elijah, to convey him to eternal bliss.

5. On leaving the church, his attention was directed to a blaze already kindled in the street. The conflagration of some of his books was then in progress. He smiled at the impotent malice which

had brought this spectacle before his eyes. In the short progress which he had yet to make, he called to those who came within hearing, not to believe that it was for error or heresy that he was punished. Such, he earnestly assured them, was not the case; but cruelty and falsehood imputed opinions to him which he had never held, and for these he was to be sacrificed.

The spot on which his blood was to be shed, was near the gate of Gottlebian, between the gardens and the gates of the suburbs. As he approached the stake, he expressed a conviction that the cause of truth and religious freedom would, despite of present appearances, eventually triumph; and expressions are imputed to him which some of his admirers believed to have burst from his lips in the holy spirit of prophecy. He declared, says *Curæus*, that "a century after him a *swan* would arise, which the priests would not be able to deal with as they did with the poor *goose* (Huss is the Bohemian word for goose) then in their hands; meaning to announce the coming of Luther."

6. He saw the stake at which he was to die, and the wood by which he was to be consumed; and as he approached the fatal pile, he sank on his knees, and addressed his thoughts to the great Arbiter of all, praying that his courage might not forsake him in this last and most important passage

of his life. He further strengthened himself by repeating sentences from the second and thirty-seventh Psalms. There are thoughts there expressed—especially in the thirty-seventh Psalm—most appropriate. Truly might he say with the Psalmist—

“ I have heard the slander of many ; fear was on every side : while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.

“ But I trusted in thee, O Lord ! I said, thou art my God !”

And justly might he add—

“ Let me not be ashamed, O Lord ! for I have called upon thee ; let the wicked be ashamed.

“ Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous things, proudly and contemptuously, against the righteous.”

Happily he might also exclaim—

“ Oh ! how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee ; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men !

“ For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes ; nevertheless, thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.”

He repeated with affecting emphasis, as a parting prayer, the solemn declaration—

“ Into thy hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth !”

Notwithstanding the efforts made by the priests to excite the people to unhallowed rage, that they might regard the destruction of a good man as a grateful offering to an all-bounteous God, some of the crowd who were near him, affected by his intrepid though humble bearing, declared, whatever his previous conduct, he manifested the sincere devotion of a true Christian now, and mourned the cruel fate reserved for him.

Not so the minions of power. Sordid interest steeled their hearts against the better feelings of humanity, and they were proud to distinguish themselves in the atrocious scene, by insulting the victim with the overflowings of their pretended zeal. The cap which their brutality had placed on his head, from the attitude which he assumed while engaged in prayer, fell off. A soldier officiously stepped forward, picked it up, and replaced it, with the remark that “ it was fitting Huss should be burnt with the devils, the masters whom he served.”

There were some who, in a charitable spirit, wished the dying man might be allowed the indulgence of a confessor. This solitary favour had previously been conceded. He was confessed in prison by a monk. It had been his wish that his

enemy and accuser, Palletz, should attend him for that purpose, that he might know the secrets of his heart, and know how freely he could forgive all who had wronged him; but this request was not complied with. When some indications of lively sympathy with the sufferings of the prisoner were manifested by the populace, a priest, who had, in honour of the occasion, assumed a dress of more than ordinary splendour, being attired in a green gown, drawn up and ornamented with red silk, approached the pile on horseback, and complained of the excess of kindness extended to Huss, as one convicted of heresy had no just claim to be heard. Such is the hateful character of false zeal in matters of religion. It closes the heart against all the solicitations of brotherly sympathy and gentle charity, and pursues the supposed object of eternal wrath, with a violence of rancour, and a thirst for torture, that can hardly be appeased by the supposed transgressor's blood.

7. While this ignominious exhibition of heartless bigotry was in progress, the sufferer remained on his knees. Being ordered to rise, he obeyed, and, in a loud voice, spoke as follows:—

“ Lord Jesus Christ! in this sad moment strengthen and support me, that, with a constant and patient mind, by thy gracious help, I may bear and endure the cruel and ignominious death

to which I am sentenced, for preaching thy most holy gospel and word."

Then addressing the crowd, he again proclaimed the cause of his death, denying the justice of his sentence, and imputing it to the malice of false witnesses. He was thus engaged when the executioner approached. It is more than probable that his superiors were not without apprehension that some violence might be provoked in his behalf, on the part of the multitude, popular as Huss had been, and astonished as they were at the collected dignity, manly presence of mind, and patient resignation, which rendered glorious the last hour of the departing martyr.

His outer garments were removed by the executioner, who bound the victim's hands behind, and then, with wet ropes, tied him to the stake. A chain was also passed round him. In performing this part of his miserable office, the man had not judged it of importance to consult the points of the compass; and when the murderous preparations were far advanced, it was discovered that the prisoner's face was towards the east, which greatly shocked some of the more learned and orthodox witnesses of the proceedings. That a condemned heretic should be permitted to look eastward in his dying moments, was, in their eyes, a sin against religion, and flying in the face of Heaven. An

order was promptly issued that the error should be corrected. John Huss was placed on the opposite side of the stake, so that he might face the west. A chain was attached to his neck, and made fast to the stake. This present, in the spirit previously displayed, he declared he contentedly received in the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ, who for him had suffered infinitely more. A fagot was placed under each of his feet, with straw between, and then he was closely built in with wood piled up to his chin.

In this melancholy situation, the blazing torch which was to kindle the devouring flame being before his eyes, a last attack was made on the firmness of the man. The Duke of Bavaria, coming forward, called to Huss that even yet it was not too late to renounce his errors. The answer given by the sufferer was in substance that which he had returned to many similar invitations, but he now vindicated his intentions in a sterner tone than he had lately used, and declared "his only object had been to bring men to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, through the gospel, and, firm to this purpose, he was now ready, with a cheerful mind and courage unsubdued, to meet his death."

The duke withdrew, considering that no more could or ought to be done, to prevent or stay the execution. All was ready to complete that "most

holy and godly labour," as it had been termed by the Bishop of Lodi, in his sermon, the destruction of an enemy of the church, or, rather, an enemy to the monstrous abuses by which the Pope, and his dissolute and intolerant cardinals and bishops, had disgraced it.

8. The word, or signal, was given to the executioner, that the work of death should forthwith commence. A torch was applied to the bundles of wood which enclosed the person of the far-famed Bohemian, and the crackling flames rose around him. In that terrible moment, the voice of the martyr was heard, loud, cheerful, and sonorous, to rise above the tumultuous murmurings of the crowd, and the roaring violence of the consuming fire. He sang part of a hymn, and his courage, which had never failed, seemed to increase as the consciousness came over him that malice could do no more. Yet did he still earnestly pray for continued support from the divine Author of his faith; and "O Jesus Christ, the only son of the living God, have mercy upon me!" was his dying prayer. This he repeated more than once, when the flames were driven by the wind violently on his face, and his voice was no longer heard. Some motion was afterwards observed, which the spectators thought indicated that consciousness had not left him, and that his supplications to Heaven were, even in that

fearful moment, continued. He bowed his head as if in imitation of the Redeemer expiring at Calvary; and, this repeated twice, he breathed his last. His remains exhibited a ghastly and shocking spectacle. Some miscalculation had been made as to the quantity of fuel necessary to consume a man to ashes; and the fagots were exhausted, while the body of the victim, which had been secured as already described, was seen, scarcely half consumed, hanging over the chain. The lower part of his person had been destroyed, but the head and body remained almost entire. Such materials as could be easily procured were hastily collected, the stake was thrown down, and the scorched and disfigured remnant of Huss was torn to pieces with hooks and forks, that it might the sooner be wasted; and a new fire being kindled, the head cut into "small gobbets," while the heart was placed on a sharp-pointed stick, and held in the blaze, the grand consummation was at length obtained, and the last fragments of the brave reformer were totally destroyed. His ashes, with a quantity of the earth on which he had stood while suffering the execution of his sentence, were then collected, with absurd anxiety and preposterous care, and thrown into the Rhine. This was done that his friends should obtain no relic which they might value as a memorial of their departed preceptor. The object was

promptly defeated. All the ground on which this dismal scene had been acted could not be removed, and portions of it, consecrated by the veneration the mourners felt for Huss, were eagerly sought, and as carefully cherished as if they had been parts of the reverend form of the sufferer, thus sinfully dismissed from worldly existence.

9. Great was the grief and indignation inspired by the news that Huss had been so inhumanly dealt with. From the pretended love and tenderness expressed by the cardinals and bishops, few had expected that they would in any case proceed to such extremities. The safe-conduct of the emperor, too, was relied upon, to save him from the last violence; and though he might be censured and degraded, his life, it was generally supposed, would be spared. Sigismund, the most charitable supposition is, had been artfully drawn on, step by step, to give his sanction to the abominable doings of the Council; but no sooner was the victim gone beyond recall, than he felt ashamed of the course he had pursued, and made an attempt to justify himself. "God alone knew," he said, "what sorrow he had felt from the course things had taken at Constance. He had laboured to save Huss, and often had quitted the Council, and even the city, in rage and fury, till the appeals addressed to

him by the cardinals and bishops, to allow them to do what was just and necessary, made him feel that he could not interfere more, without dissolving the whole Council, a council assembled for high and important purposes connected with religion, and to which ambassadors had been sent from all the kings and princes in Christendom."

It was in vain that this apology was put forth to cover imperial baseness. The safe-conduct given to Huss could not be forgotten. To pretend that it was only intended to protect him on his way to Constance, is too gross an absurdity to be listened to for a moment. Who would value a safe-conduct to a prison and the stake? To Huss, it was unquestionably held out that the safe-conduct would protect his person going and coming (anything else must be obviously worthless), however the principles he maintained might be reprobated. The emperor either designed, in the first instance, fraudulently to entrap the unsuspecting Bohemian, or, having meant him fairly then, was subsequently induced, to ingratiate himself with the cardinals and bishops, to withdraw the conceded boon. In either case, he acted a cruel, perfidious, and despicable part. More than four centuries have passed away, and the sentence pronounced on his conduct by his contemporaries has not been reversed. He is still regarded as a heartless vio-

lator of his solemnly pledged faith, and shame must rest on his memory.

Enough has been said of the folly of for a moment supposing that Huss, being of sound mind, could wish for the emperor's protection to place him in the hands of his murderers. The document which has been quoted leaves no doubt on the subject; the exact words of the original are said to have been these:—

“Honorabilem magistrum Johannem Huss, S. T., Baccalaureum, etc., de regno Boemiæ, in Concilium Generale. . . . transeuntem . . . vobis omnibus et vestrum cuilibet pleno recom- mandamus affectu, desiderantes, quatenus ipsum, cum ad vos pervenerit, gratè suscipere . . . om- nique prorsus impedimento remoto transire, stare, morari, et redire liberè permittatis, sibi que et suis.” *

* *Act Public.* apud Bzovium, ann. 1414, sect. 17.

CHAPTER XXII.

JEROME OF PRAGUE.

1. Early career of Jerome of Prague.—2. Goes to Constance to assist Huss.—3. Vindicates the principles maintained by his friend, and, preparing to return to Prague, is made prisoner.—4. His challenge, and the answer to it.—5. He boldly defends his faith.—6. Hostile and outrageous conduct of the members of the Council when Jerome appears before them.—7. He is sent to prison.—8. An unhopcd-for comforter.—9. Severities experienced during his imprisonment.—10. His resolution fails beneath their infliction.—11. Recantation of Jerome.—12. Remorse of Jerome for having renounced his principles.—13. Differences among the members of the Council as to Jerome's fate.—14. New questions put to him which he refuses to answer in private.—15. He is again brought before the Council.—16. Additional charges preferred.—17. He eloquently defends himself.—18. Description given of his speech and manner by Poggius, the Pope's secretary.—19. Jerome recalls his recantation.

1. INTIMATELY connected as is the history of Huss with the sacred cause in which Lord Cobham strove, not less so is that of his brave and generous disciple Jerome of Prague; nor is it less interesting in itself than that of John Huss. He

was a man of great talents, and had sought for learning in the principal seminaries of that period. He visited the cities of Heidelberg, Cologne, Paris, Oxford, and Prague. The dignity of M.A. he attained at four of the places just enumerated; and that of D.D. at Oxford, in 1399. While there, he carefully studied the English language, and became intimately acquainted with the works of Wickliffe, which had made a great impression on the public mind.

The laxity of discipline, and the abuses which had crept into the church, as described in the preceding pages, had become the theme of general discussion throughout the land; and the fame of Wickliffe, who had so boldly defended a reform, was constantly on the increase. Jerome shared the general admiration which was felt for his writings. His vigorous attack on those malpractices which had brought discredit on the established church were favourably applauded by the friend of Huss. The applause which they commanded made him feel anxious to co-operate with that great enemy of papal oppression. He returned to Prague in 1400, and there openly declared for the opinions of Wickliffe, whose works he translated into the Bohemian language, a task for which he was eminently qualified. With feelings like his, he was naturally attracted to Huss, through whom "Wick-

liffe learning" was now making great progress in his native city. He became the disciple, or the scholar, of Huss, and an attachment sprang up between them which terminated but with life, if death, instead of terminating a friendship so spiritual and sublime, may not rather be regarded as having made it more perfect and enduring than any worldly union, under the happiest circumstances, could ever prove. Inferior to Huss in meek serenity, combined with unconquerable determination, Jerome was held to be even his superior in learning and general ability. His piety was ardent and sincere; and if, in some moments of his painful career, his courage was subdued by the menacing array of power and infuriate hostility, his failing was bravely redeemed by his subsequent exhibition of undaunted zeal, the most devoted that mortal man could display. He regarded with just indignation the unhallowed dissipation which marked the lives of the clergy, and anxiously joined his best efforts to those of Huss and Cobham to reprove the offenders, and laboured, with enthusiasm and diligence not to be described, in the sacred cause of church reform.

From his great celebrity, he was invited by the King of Poland, in 1410, to regulate the university of Cracow. His labours concluded there, he visited Hungary, and his opinions on religious

matters soon began to make him obnoxious to the ruling powers. Wickliffe's doctrines, espoused and defended by Lord Cobham and his friends, being introduced to the continent, as before described, so rapidly acquired dominion over the hearts of those who, daring to think for themselves, could distinguish between high-sounding professions of sanctity, and a really holy life, that the whole fabric of priestcraft, as it then existed at Rome, was thought, and not without reason, to be in danger. He was accused of heresy, and, being at Vienna, was thrown into prison, but after a time set at liberty, in consequence of the representations made in his favour by the university of Prague.

2. The generous feelings which united the two friends, Huss and Jerome, are conspicuously exhibited in what occurred when the troubles of the former began. The conduct of each was strongly characteristic; that of Huss, full of calm resignation, anxious for the safety of his friend, but negligent of himself,—that of Jerome, impetuously generous, but indifferently regulated, and, indeed, perilous to himself, but mischievous to Huss, whom he ardently coveted to serve. On learning that the latter had been imprisoned, Jerome wrote to animate him in the cause of truth, and to exhort him not to let any vain threatenings induce him to abandon their great object—a spiritual reform. If

his adversaries were likely to overpower him by their violence, Jerome declared his readiness to appear at Constance, in order to support his opinions. Huss lost no time in desiring him to put away the thought of coming to his assistance, as he justly apprehended that, doing so, without serving him, he might place his own life in jeopardy. Jerome contemplated a war of words, in which he hoped reason and eloquence would prevail; Huss was, by that time, too well aware that a prison, chains, and the stake were the means on which his enemies relied for ultimate triumph. The counsel, wisely and kindly given by Huss, was disregarded by Jerome, who deemed it cowardice not to attempt to offer every aid in his power, and he, in consequence, repaired to Constance while the Council was sitting. He arrived in that city on the 4th of April, 1415, and his coming thither at that moment created a considerable sensation. A very short time sufficed to convince him that the apprehensions of Huss were but too well founded. He discovered, unhappily too late, that it was impossible for him to bring comfort to his friend, but, remaining there, he might add to his affliction, as he was informed the Council were prepared to throw him into prison, without even allowing him a hearing. Prudence, under these circumstances, suggested that it was time to withdraw, and he accordingly left Con-

stance for Iberling, an imperial town, but a mile distant. Thence, considering himself secure, he made application to the emperor for a safe-conduct, which was refused. Sigismund, though he had the baseness to acquiesce in the inhuman sophistry by which the Council justified their cruelty to John Huss, was evidently ill at ease, and wished not to incur a double portion of obloquy. He therefore withheld that which, conceded to the friend of Huss as a protection, might have been converted into a snare. On being denied a safe-conduct, Jerome caused placards to be posted in the most public places at Constance, which contained, in substance, the often-reiterated declaration of Huss. He vindicated the doctrines he had taught, and declared his readiness to justify his conduct in every respect before the Council, in person, if he could, in the first instance, obtain a guarantee from the emperor that he should not be deprived of his liberty by that body. He waited in the neighbourhood some days, to ascertain the effect of this challenge, but the Council treated it with contempt, and did not vouchsafe to notice it. He then obtained, from the Bohemian nobles who were at Constance, a certificate that he had taken every step consistent with his personal safety, to obtain an audience, but to no purpose, and a declaration that it was not till these efforts had

failed that he resolved on returning to his native country.

3. After this circumspect course of proceeding, Jerome seems to have been abandoned by the cautious anxiety for self-preservation which prompted it, or, which is perhaps equally probable, his indignation, moved by the persecution of his friend, and the neglect which he himself had experienced, became too fierce to be restrained within ordinary limits. He had reached a village on the borders of the Black Forest, when he had the misfortune to join company with certain priests who were journeying in that direction. They fell into conversation, amicable at first, but, the acts of the Council, then sitting, being discussed, a warm dispute arose. Jerome could not disguise his feelings, and vented them in language which shocked them as coarsely sacrilegious, for he scrupled not to name what they called "the holy and sacred Council," "the devil's school," and "the synagogue of sin." Such gross contempt for authority the priests reported to the magistrates of the place, who held it to be their duty at once to interfere, with a view to arrest the march of impiety. Jerome was seized, and delivered to the custody of the Duke of Sultzbach, who, in accordance with the judgment he formed of what was necessary to forward the ends of impartial justice, wrote to that

body which was the object of Jerome's attack, for instructions respecting the future disposition of the prisoner. The answer returned was what might be expected from the Council. They desired that Jerome should be forthwith transferred to Constance, that his conduct might be fully investigated. The duke lost no time in meeting the wish thus conveyed, and Jerome was immediately sent to Constance in fetters. Great importance was attached to his capture. It was a vast triumph for the excited minds then assuming to act in the profaned name of religion, for the glory of God. The elector palatine came to meet the prisoner, attended with a numerous retinue, and he, being on horseback, claimed the honour of leading the unfortunate Jerome into the city by a long chain, which was attached to his person. Animated by a sincere consciousness that he had only done what men and angels might approve, Jerome was nothing awed, but, perhaps, in some degree flattered and elevated by the vain parade his captors made of him, and fully prepared to bear every infliction, every wrong, which vengeance could perpetrate.

4. The offer which Jerome had volunteered to come forward and defend his opinions, and which he had caused to be placed on the city gates, and on all the churches and monasteries in Constance,

had given unpardonable offence. Yet, beyond a strong assertion that he had never wished to offend, it contained little that an impartial eye would have regarded as likely to provoke resentment. In substance it ran thus:—

“To the most noble prince, the Lord Sigismund, by the grace of God King of the Romans and of Hungary, &c. I, Jerome of Prague, Master of Arts of the General University of Paris, as also of Colleyn, Heidelberg, and Prague, by these my letters do notify to the king, together with the whole reverend Council, and, as much as depends upon me, wish all men to know, that because of crafty slanderers, backbiters, and false accusers, I am ready, freely and of my own will, to repair to Constance, there to declare, openly before the whole Council, the purity and sincerity of my true faith and my innocence, and not secretly before any private or particular person. Wherefore, if there be any of my slanderers, of whatever nation, or whatever their estate, who will object against me any crime of error or heresy, let them come forth and confront me in the presence of the said Council, and in their own names prove against me; and I will be ready, as I have written, to answer for all that I have done: and if it so fall out, that I be found guilty of error or heresy, then I will not refuse to suffer such punishment as shall

be meet and fitting for an erroneous person or an heretic.

“Wherefore, I most humbly beseech my lord the king, and the whole sacred Council, that I may have, to the end and purpose aforesaid, safe and sure access; and if it happen that I offer such equity and right as I do, before any fault be proved against me, I shall be arrested, imprisoned, or have any violence done to me, that then it may be manifest unto the whole world, that the General Council doth not proceed according to equity and justice, if they would, by any means, put me back from this plain and straightforward course, being come hither, freely, and of my own mind and accord, which thing I suppose to be far from the thoughts of so sacred and holy a council of wise men.”

This paper, written in the Latin and German languages, he took every means then commonly in use to make public. As already mentioned, it did not immediately call forth any reply, but, when it was known that he was in custody at Saltzberg, notice was taken of it, and, at the instance of Palletz and De Causis, he was cited to appear. A paper to the following effect was accordingly exhibited, as an answer to his challenge, on the city gates and on the church doors.

“The sacred and holy General Synod and Council

of Constance, congregated and gathered together in the name of the Holy Ghost, representing the universal church militant, unto Jerome of Prague, who writes himself a master of arts of so many universities, and affecting those things only which pertain to modesty and sobriety, and confessing that he knoweth no more than he ought to know.

“Know, then, that a certain writing hath come to our understanding and knowledge, set up, as it were, by thyself, on the doors of the churches, and on the gates of the city of Constance, on the Sunday when there was singing in the church ‘*Quasi modo geniti,*’ wherein thou dost affirm that thou wilt openly answer all thy accusers and slanderers which object any crime, error, or heresy, against thee, whereof thou art marvellously defamed and accused before us, and especially touching the doctrine of Wickliffe, and other doctrines contrary to the Catholic faith, so thou mightest have a safe-conduct to come. But, forasmuch as it behoves us mainly to look after those crafty spirits which go about to destroy the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, therefore we do cite and call forth, by the tenor of these presents, thy person, manifoldly defamed and suspected for the temerarious affirming and teaching of many fearful errors, so that, within fifteen days from the date of these presents, whereof five are appointed for the first term, five for the

second, and other five for the third, we do ordain and appoint, by canonical admonition and warning, that thou dost appear in the public session of the Council, if there be any holden, on the same day, or else the first day immediately following when any session shall be, according to the tenor of thy said writing, that thou mayest answer to those things which any person or persons shall object against thee, or lay to thy charge, touching thy faith, and to receive and have justice so much as in us lieth, and as the Catholic faith shall require, we offer and assign to thee here, by the tenor of our safe-conduct from all violence, (justice being always saved,) certifying thee, that, whether thou dost appear or not at the said term or time appointed, notwithstanding process shall go forward against thee by the said sacred Council, or by their commissioners for the time aforesaid, not observed and kept, thy contumacy or stubbornness in anything notwithstanding. Given in the sixth session of the General Council, the 17th day of April, under the seals of the Presidents of the four nations.—Grumpert Faker, Notary of the Germans.”

The promise of security against all violence—“justice always saved”—could not inspire Jerome with confidence, when it was seen, in the case of Huss, how easy it was for the emperor and the Council to sanction outrageous severity, and then

call it justice. He was, therefore, fully warranted in attempting, as he had done, to return to Prague, since he found that to accomplish the generous object of his coming was impossible.

It may be charged against him as inconsistent, that, having concluded upon this step, he should have allowed any heat of temper, or violence of language, to place him in the power of his enemies. Some, however, have thought that he only fell into a trap which had been artfully prepared for him, and, if such be the case, it is not too much to suppose, that, had the fraud failed, open violence would have been used, and his retreat effectually cut off. It may also be suspected that what fell from him was considerably exaggerated.

That it was the fixed purpose of the Council to pursue him to the utmost, we are compelled to infer, from the transports of furious exultation which burst forth when they saw him standing a prisoner and in chains before them. What would be thought, if, in a modern court of justice, in place of a determination to put down any tumultuary expression of feeling, we should see, on a person being placed at the bar, before any inquiry into his guilt or innocence had been entered upon, a vast assembly of the gravest persons in the land rise and shout "Take him away and hang him"? Yet this would only be to imitate the frantic and barbarous

cruelty of those who had to decide on the fate of Jerome of Prague.

5. The moment he appeared in presence of that body by whom John Huss was doomed to the stake, he was greeted with a yell of disapprobation, and "Away with the heretic!" "Burn him, burn him!" were the cries which arose from all parts of the hall. Jerome braved the tumult with great courage, though, remembering what their first proceedings against his friend had been, it was sufficiently portentous to fill with alarm one who had not ceased to value life.

A letter was sent with the prisoner by the Duke of Bavaria, stating that chance had thrown him into his hands, and that, hearing an evil report of his heresies, it had been thought right to send him to the Council, that he might clear himself of the errors imputed. It was theirs to determine whether he was free from the detestable doctrines of Wickliffe, and to deal with him accordingly. The letter contained flattering compliments to the wisdom and sanctity of the Council, which were listened to with satisfaction; but these afforded infinitely less gratification to that stern and merciless assemblage, than the welcome announcement that the ill-fated Jerome was their prisoner.

The Council proceeded to interrogate him on his general conduct, and it was demanded "why,

having come to Constance, he had thought fit to withdraw ; and why, when cited before them, he had failed to appear ?” His reply was, that he had judged it right to do so, when he found that he could obtain no safe-conduct from them, nor from his sovereign ; and that his decision was considered by many what it ought to be, he showed, by referring to letters in approbation of the step resolved upon, which he had received from the nobles of Bohemia. He said “he had decided not of his own will ; but, notwithstanding all misgivings, had he known of the citation, even though he should already have returned to Bohemia, he would certainly have obeyed it.”

6. Little credit was given to this assertion. The Council throughout affected to regard him with the most profound disdain. It was their impression that he made a virtue of necessity, and professed a disposition to obey, only because it was impossible to escape. Gerson, on this, as on other occasions, made himself conspicuous by the fierce and unmeasured wrath with which he exerted himself in the cause of persecution ; and, not content with calling on the prisoner to account for his recent conduct, taunted him with his arrogance in former times, declaring that, “when he was in Paris, he had thought himself an angel on account of his eloquence, and had disturbed the whole university by

propagating erroneous doctrines." The prisoner replied, that the matter he had advanced when at Paris was offered in the character of a philosopher and a master of universities; and if he could be proved to have really favoured what was false, he was now perfectly open to conviction, and, on being proved to be wrong, would gladly retract. The accusation made by Gerson was urged by others in various shapes, and answers to the same effect were returned. By the master of the university at Heidelberg, Jerome was stated to have painted, on one occasion, a shield or scutcheon, in which the three persons of the Trinity were represented as water, snow, and ice. Jerome declared that, whatever he had preached or painted elsewhere, he was ready then to preach or paint, and to defend what he had done to the best of his ability, but always holding himself prepared to abandon any opinion shown to be at variance with scripture.

His answers were so little satisfactory, that the cry of "Burn the heretic!" was again raised. In the midst of the rancour and fury which encompassed him, he stood perfectly serene. Content to meet the cruel fate to which it was proposed to doom him, he humbly, but courageously, desired, "if his death could give them satisfaction, that they should not spare him, but proceed, in God's name, to do their will."

The Bishop of Salisbury made a taunting speech, in which he eulogised that mercy which he had little disposition to extend to a helpless fellow-creature. "It was far," he said, "from his wish, and that of the Council, to doom him to death. Very different was their object, as, in pious imitation of their Divine Master, what they desired was, 'not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live.'" No pity, however, had found its way to his heart, or to those of his companions. They thought it dignified and becoming to mock the destined sufferer, by speaking of compassion which they could not feel.

7. Jerome saw it was in vain to attempt to soften men so sternly resolved to pursue and to condemn, and he in no respect departed from what he had previously advanced. By order of the Council, he was forthwith committed to prison.

He was first placed in a cell adjoining the hall in which the Council held their sittings, and there, while thoughtfully revolving in his mind the violence already used towards him, and the further severity which he had to expect, he was surprised to hear himself addressed in a friendly strain.—"Fear not, Jerome," exclaimed a voice;—"fear not to die in the cause of that truth, which, through life, thou hast laboured to advance."

"Whoever thou art," the prisoner gratefully re-

plied, "take the sincere thanks of an abject oppressed man for thy soothing counsel. True it is, I have lived to strive in the cause of truth. Already I have suffered for it; the hardest task remains to be fulfilled, but humbly I trust in God that he will support my spirit against the weakness of flesh and blood, that I may endure with constancy."

8. The person by whom he had been so unexpectedly greeted was a notary, named Peter Mlademewitz, who, when the Council were about to proceed to the condemnation of the writings of Huss, without hearing him in defence of the parts objected to, had hastened to transmit this determination to De Chlume and his friends. Through making them acquainted with what was proposed, the humane and timely effort caused an appeal to the emperor to be forwarded, which proved successful. This notary—such was his calling—now soothingly condoled with the unfortunate Jerome on the manifold dangers by which he was encompassed, but strongly exhorted him not to suffer the cruelty of his enemies to prevail so far as to lead him for a moment to abandon his principles. Jerome declared that, though he had not wilfully courted danger, he had no weak fear of death, and manifested a firm resolution to act on the advice he had received.

Their conference was short. It was from a win-

dow in the cloister which looked on the apartment to which Jerome had been temporarily committed, that Peter had found the means of thus communicating with him. The guard, in whose custody he was, overheard their conversation, and, resentful of any word of sympathy being uttered to his charge, ordered Peter away, and even used blows to force him to withdraw.

A second person came to the same place, animated by the compassionate disposition of the notary. He was seized, and detained to give an account of himself. He, unfortunately, could not prove that he was other than guilty of pity. This drew upon him a severe reprimand, and he was not released till he had promised, upon oath, to communicate no more with the reprobate heretic, whom the holy Council had devoted to vengeance.

9. In his case, cruel men seemed unusually impatient to commence the work of torture. That evening he was bound with chains attached to his hands and his neck, and he was carried to a tower in St. Paul's Churchyard, in the city of Constance, where he was made fast to a great block, while his feet were secured in the stocks. This was dealing with him harshly, but it was little to what, even in that early stage of his persecution, the ill-fated scholar was compelled to endure. By a refinement in cruelty he was

compelled to sit in such a position that every moment he was subjected to the most intolerable pain. The block to which his hands were chained was so high that he could not sit on it without having his head thrown painfully forward in such a manner that it hung down. Thus barbarously restrained, his life was endangered, and to rest was impossible.

While such monstrous inflictions were continued, the friends of Jerome were kept ignorant of the exact place of his confinement. Two days and two nights he remained in this miserable situation, being allowed no better sustenance than bread and water. One of his keepers at length relented, and made the friendly notary acquainted with the treatment to which the prisoner was subjected, as well as with the place of his incarceration. Peter obtained permission from the keeper to supply Jerome with meat, and humanely hastened to avail himself of the licence. But the uneasy posture forced upon the sufferer, and from which there was no disposition to relieve him, rendered the benevolence of the notary of little or no avail. He lost his appetite, and, after eleven days, his health was so seriously impaired, that there was every reason to expect his misery would terminate in death. Jerome believed that the moment had nearly arrived when he must stand before th

great Judge of all the earth; and to fit him for the awful transition, he desired to be indulged with the assistance of a confessor. But that was too mighty a favour to be easily granted. Those who pretended that they only punished the body in order to purify, and eventually save the soul, would not allow the fainting captive the spiritual consolation which he might derive from the attentions of a minister named by themselves, measured and imperfect, as at best they must be, till after much importunity had been used.

When, at length, his prayer was granted, as might be expected, the confessor sent to him used every argument to induce him to renounce the opinions he had preached, and was resolved, while he had life, to defend. All was to no purpose; Jerome remained immovable, and his obstinacy was more fiercely condemned than ever. The atrocious murder of Huss was used as an instrument to subdue his determination. When that cruelly betrayed man had been carried to the stake, his torments were exultingly brought under the consideration of his friend and scholar. Jerome still resisted, but his enemies were not to be worn out. Day after day passed away, and all the rigours of his confinement remained unabated; while the fiercest threats were unceasingly launched, that he should perish in the flames, as Huss had done. He was repeat-

edly brought before the Council. Three times he was exposed to all the hateful taunts and fearful menaces which fanatical virulence, armed with unbounded power, could urge against one lonely, friendless captive. Shall we blame the unhappy Jerome, if he did not go through this tremendous ordeal with all the unshaken firmness of his predecessor? Shall we wonder, if, under such appalling circumstances, his courage failed him for a season? Irksome confinement, miserable privation, sickness, and terrifying threats, on the one hand,—liberty, affluence, health, and flattering promises, on the other,—can we feel amazed, that, thus tortured and tempted, poor human nature sank for a time vanquished and exhausted in the lamentable strife? It should rather create surprise that the friendless victim held out so long as Jerome resisted, than that he yielded at last.

10. At last, certainly, he did yield. However painful the admission, the fact cannot be denied, that the intrepidity with which Jerome entered on the contest, and the firmness with which he sustained the first savage attacks of his adversaries, sank under long captivity, and all the frightful concomitants which have been described. He no longer demanded proofs from scripture that he had erred, but admitted that his judgment might have been deceived. The Council were rejoiced to find that

they had happily succeeded in shaking the proud spirit which they had begun to regard as unconquerable. No step was omitted which might improve, for their purpose, this happy state of things. All the artillery of Rome, previously used against his strength, continued to play upon his weakness. He consented, at length, publicly to retract what he had so long maintained, and a form of recantation was prepared for his signature. Care was taken to render it as strong and as bitter to the subdued reformer as possible. Not only was it made to breathe the fullest approbation of all that he had questioned or condemned, and to reprobate what he had supported, but he was also made to subscribe to the sentence promulgated against the writings of Huss, and, worse than that, to testify approbation of the murder of his departed friend. Finally, it bound him never to recant what was then extorted, on the pain of the heaviest punishment that could fall on him here, and eternal perdition in the world to come. It ran nearly as follows :—

11. “I, Jerome of Prague, Master of Arts, acknowledge the Catholic Church and the apostolic faith, do accurse and renounce all heresies, and, especially, that with which I have heretofore been charged, and which, in time past, John Wickliffe and John Huss held and taught in their

works, treatises, and sermons, made to the clergy, for the which cause, the said Wickliffe and Huss, together with their said doctrines and errors, are condemned by this holy Synod of Constance, and all the said doctrines, sentence by sentence, condemned, and, especially, in certain articles set forth in the judgments given against them by this sacred Council.

“Also, I accord and agree to and with the holy Church of Rome, the apostolic seat in this sacred Council, and with my mouth and heart do profess in all things, and touching all things, and especially as touching the keys, sacraments, orders and offices, and ecclesiastical censures, pardons, relics of saints, ecclesiastical liberty, also ceremonies, and all other things pertaining unto the Christian religion, as the Church of Rome, the apostolic see, and this sacred Council do profess, and especially that many of the said articles are notoriously heretical and lately reprovèd by the holy fathers, some of them blasphemous, others erroneous, some offensive to godly ears, and many of them daring and seditious. Such also were counted the articles lately condemned by this sacred Council, and it was inhibited and forbidden, to all and singular Catholic men, hereafter to preach, teach, or presume to hold or maintain any of the said articles, under pain of being accursed.

“ And I, the said Jerome, forasmuch as I have laboured, by scholastic arts, to persuade to the opinion *de universalibus realibus*, and that one substance of the same kind should signify many things, subject under the same and every one, as St. Ambrose, Jerome, Augustin, and likewise others do affirm, for the teaching hereof by a plain example, I described, as it were, a certain triangle, form, or figure, the which I called ‘the shield of faith,’ therefore, utterly to exclude and take away the erroneous and wicked understanding thereof, the which, peradventure, some men may gather thereby, I do say, affirm, and declare, that I never made the same figure, neither named it ‘the shield of faith,’ to that intent or purpose that I would extol or prefer the opinion of universalities above or before the contrary opinion, in such sort, as, though that were ‘the shield of faith,’ and that, without the affirmation thereof, the Catholic faith could not be defended or maintained, when as I myself would not obstinately adhere thereunto. But this I said, because I had put example in the description of the triangular form, that one divine essence consisted of three subjects or persons, in themselves distinct—that is to say, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the article of which Trinity is the chief shield of faith and foundation of the catholic truth.

“Furthermore, that it may be evident unto all men what the causes were for that which I was reputed and thought to maintain, and favour some time John Huss, I signify to all men, by these presents, that when I had heard him often, both in his sermons and also in the schools, I believed that he was a very good man, and that he neither did in any point gainsay the traditions of our holy mother the church nor holy doctors, insomuch as, when I was lately in the city, and the articles which I affirmed were shown to me, which were also condemned by the sacred Council, at the first sight of them I did not believe they were his, at least, not in that form. But when as I had understood, by certain famous doctors and masters of divinity, that they were his articles, I required, for my further information and satisfaction, to have the books of his own handwriting shown to me, wherein it was said those articles were contained, the which books, when they were produced to me, written in his own hand, which I did know as well as my own, I found that all and every one of the articles were therein written in like form as they are condemned. Wherefore, I do worthily judge and think him and his doctrine, with his adherents, to be condemned and reprovèd, by this sacred Council, as heretical and without reason. All which, the premises, with a pure mind and con-

science, I do here pronounce and speak, being now fully and sufficiently informed of the aforesaid sentences given by this sacred Council against the said late John Wickliffe and John Huss, and against their own persons, unto the which judgment, as a devout Catholic in all things, I do most humbly consent and agree.

“Also, I, the aforesaid Jerome, who, before the reverend fathers the lords cardinals, and reverend lords, prelates, and doctors, and other worshipful persons of this sacred Council, in this same place, did freely and willingly declare and expound my intent and purpose; amongst other things, speaking of the church, did divide the same into three parts; and, as I did perceive afterwards, it was understood by some that I would affirm that in the triumphant church there was faith, whereas I do firmly believe that there is the blessed sight and beholding of God, excluding all dark apprehension and knowledge. And now also I do say, affirm, and declare, that it was never my intent and purpose to prove that there should be faith, speaking of faith as faith is commonly defined, but knowledge, far exceeding faith; and, generally, whatsoever I have said, either then or at any time before, I do refer and most humbly submit myself to the determination of this sacred Council of Constance.

“Moreover, I do swear by the most Holy Trinity, and also by the most Holy Gospel, that I will for evermore remain and persevere, without all doubt, in the truth of the Catholic Church; and all such as, by their doctrine and teaching, shall impugn this faith, I judge them worthy, together with their doctrines, of eternal curse. And if I myself, at any time (which God forbid I should), do presume to preach or teach contrary thereto, I will submit myself to the severity of the canons, and be bound to endure eternal pain and punishment. Whereupon, I do deliver by this my confession and tenor of my profession, willingly before this sacred General Council, and have subscribed and written all these things with my own hand.”

This confession, signed by Jerome, was made public with great exultation by the Council; but in no respect did they keep good faith with the prisoner. Though they had so far prevailed over his justly excited apprehensions, as to induce him to degrade himself by signing and adopting a recantation which they had drawn up, they were well assured that his reason was unconvinced. Sickness, and pain, and fear, had abated his resolution, but his heart was not in the act, and they expected that, when beyond their reach, he would again appear the champion of Wickliffe and Wickliffe's opinions. This was the spectre which un-

ceasingly haunted these spiritual tyrants; and their fears rendered them more wildly ferocious than ever. They had promised him freedom as the price of his recantation; and he expected that, having submitted to their will, the door of his prison would be immediately thrown open. That justice he claimed in vain. To the same tower in which he had pined so long, he was again sent, and guarded by armed men as closely as ever. His chains were indeed removed, and in other respects he was treated with less severity than he had previously experienced; but the privilege which the poor captive naturally looked for, of going abroad and of flying far away from his unrelenting enemies, as well as from the friends who were scandalised by his weakness, was one which he was destined never to enjoy.

12. Great as the loss of liberty must appear to every one, it is only those who have been subjected to a tedious incarceration that can duly appreciate the blessing of breathing the fresh air free from restraint. To the enfeebled Jerome, however, a prolongation of imprisonment was painful in the extreme. But the bodily distress it inflicted was as nothing compared with the misery which filled his mind, when he recalled what he had done. That he, who had fondly believed himself a chosen instrument in the hands of the Almighty to wake

sinner to repentance,—that he, who, from conviction, had been the animated advocate of truth, and had often proclaimed his readiness to die in its cause, should have meanly yielded to the threats or promises of guilty men, so far as to deny the faith he had professed, and to sanction the murder of his revered departed friend, he felt to be an accumulation of shame and sin, which, on earth, must connect undying infamy with his name, and, more than that, must annihilate every well-founded hope of happiness in a future world. Severe as the pains had been under which his spirit gave way, he found that they could be infinitely surpassed by those tortures which followed the recreant act to which he had been brought—the impious abandonment of duty. He felt that, like Peter, he had denied his master; and, like Peter, he wept bitterly, for that he had failed in the most important moment of his earthly pilgrimage. Returning health he loathed as the fearful wages of sin. With real sorrow he deplored the awful transgression into which, by his own weakness and the artful cruelty of others, he had most unexpectedly been betrayed. Jerome felt that, to save life, he had sacrificed all that rendered life valuable; and, with unavailing tears, incessantly lamented the ignominious step he had, in evil hour, been induced to commit himself.

13. In this deplorable state, his grief soon attracted the notice of his enemies, nor was his speech so guarded as to leave them long in doubt of what was passing in his heart. Palletz and De Causis, anxious for the *éclat* of another burning, were on the alert to prefer new charges; and some Carmelite friars from Prague, who were greatly disappointed at his not being punished by fire, combined with them to represent that his recantation was insincere, and that his only object had been to escape the fate of John Huss. New articles were exhibited against the miserable Jerome, and submitted to the Council, the framers of which demanded that he should be compelled to answer. On this subject some difference of opinion arose. The Cardinal of Cambray, and others, who had been most virulent against Huss, were reluctant to proceed further in the case of Jerome. They perhaps saw that the horror inspired by the shedding of guiltless blood, was working in a way not at all to be desired by the church which they laboured to sustain, and felt that, in this case, forbearance would be true policy. Whether such considerations, or whether, for a moment, pity touched their hearts, cannot now be known; but, certain it is, they favoured the milder course, and proposed that the prisoner, after having subscribed to his recantation and degradation, should be permitted to return to Bohemia.

Gerson and Naso were most hostile to his liberation. They expressed great horror for that weakness or wickedness, which would let such a desperate enemy of the faith loose again when once secured, to make war on the peace, well-being, and everlasting salvation of mankind. After all the clergy in Bohemia had suffered from his preachings against them, now to suffer him to escape would be cruelty to them, and most fatal in its consequences. Such a course the learned persons just named fiercely opposed; and a hint was thrown out by Naso, that it might be feared those who advised it were bribed to do so, either by heretics, the friends of the prisoner, or by the King of Bohemia, with whom he understood Jerome to be a favourite. Upon this, the cardinal, and others that acted with him, declined further interference; and the Patriarch of Antioch, who had pronounced the sentence of condemnation against Huss, and a German doctor, were named judges in the case, and it was resolved that they should examine Jerome in prison, and obtain his answers to the new questions which had been preferred.

14. Pursuant to this determination, they waited on him for the purpose above stated. They found him, though in deep affliction, anything but tractable. A prey to miserable reflection, from the hour in which his offending hand was persuaded to sign

the form of recantation, he had now no fear of any cruelty which his enemies might exercise, as all their ingenuity could supply no torment equal to the horrors of self-condemnation under which he groaned. After what had occurred, after what he had done, he felt that they had no right to interrogate him further, and refused to submit to a private trial, or to answer any questions put to him in prison. If he were called upon to give further explanations as to the state of his mind, he claimed to have an opportunity of doing it in open court. On this he steadfastly insisted, and his persecutors, in the end, gave way. He had an object, to gain which he held to be of the greatest importance; but what that object was, their penetration, much as they suspected or more than suspected him, did not enable them to guess. After full consideration, they agreed that he should have the benefit of a public audience, at which they calculated his recantation would be renewed, though some explanation might be offered, with which it would be for them to deal.

This concession—the permission to speak—greatly relieved his mind, which soon recovered all its former firmness and tone, and enabled him to act a bold, uncompromising, and, indeed, a splendid part, through the rest of his mortal career.

15. The Council met in great numbers, on

Saturday, the 25th of May, 1416, in the cathedral church of Constance. Jerome, still sorely oppressed with the recollection of what he had done when last there, once more appeared before them. He felt that he had sinned against those who had heretofore sought religious instruction from him, and against his great Creator. Deep remorse oppressed him, and he sighed but to atone for, and to undo, as far as might be, the wrong he had done.

Though his enemies desired again to extort a recantation, they had laid a snare for his life. Operating on his former terrors, they calculated on heaping new obloquy on the broken-spirited prisoner; and many in the Council, despite of his submission, still hoped to find an excuse for shedding his blood.

16. One hundred and seven new articles were brought forward against him, and it was expected that, overwhelmed by the force of these accusations, he would sink before his judges almost an unresisting victim. Danger, however, gave him strength, and he so ably defended himself, that those who hated were compelled to admire. Forty of the articles he successfully answered, and proved that the witnesses had employed falsehood to blacken his character. His defence continued till the approach of noon, when, as it was considered the business could not be finally disposed of that day,

an adjournment was resolved upon. The Court named the following Tuesday for renewing the proceedings. At an early hour in the morning of the day appointed, he resumed his address. His courage amazed, and his eloquence startled, his most relentless enemies. They questioned him, as they had done Huss, as to his belief in the existence of material bread in the sacrament, after the words of consecration had been pronounced, and he replied in the same terms which his revered preceptor had used. He was opposed by violence instead of argument, and told that he treated the Council with contempt. Indignant at his answers, one monk exclaimed aloud—"I swear that to be true which thou deniest." Jerome calmly replied to him, in Latin, that thus to swear was the readiest way to deceive. To all the harsh language addressed to him he gave the most fearless answers; and in the end he claimed, after the witnesses against him had been examined, to be heard for a while without interruption. Curiosity rather than benevolence granted his request.

17. He commenced by remarking on the favourable hearing which had been accorded to all who were opposed to him, and urged that in fairness he ought to be listened to with like attention. Hoping that this indulgence was now to be granted, he humbly implored the Eternal Being, whose glory

he desired, to bestow courage, ability, and voice, to give utterance to those solemn truths which might best tend to the salvation of his own soul and that of others. He then reminded the Council of the flagrant injustice which they had committed, and commented on it in terms of just indignation, by opposing themselves to the full and public audience he had claimed.

“What monstrous injustice,” he exclaimed, “is this! For three hundred and forty days I have been confined in various prisons, subjected to the greatest severities, and to miseries and privations of all kinds, and denied the means of defending myself, while your ears have been open to all my wicked adversaries could urge to accomplish my destruction. Even now, you think it much to attend to me for a single hour, though all the black calumnies invented and fabricated to injure me have met with a cordial welcome, and I on these base misrepresentations have been deemed a heretic, an enemy to the Catholic faith, and a persecutor of priests. None cared to listen to apology or explanation from me, to learn what I really have been. Remember, whatever your present authority, you are still but men, and may be deceived by false appearances. True it is, the lights of the world and the wisest among men are reputed to be of this Council. It is therefore the more important that

you should have a care not to act with rashness or injustice. Not for myself alone do I plead ; my cause is the common cause of all Christians. The unjust condemnation of me to-day may be more pernicious to posterity, from the mischievous example it will furnish, than it can possibly be to me."

As might be expected from such an assembly, he could gain no calm and impartial hearing. With supercilious indifference, they turned a deaf ear to the admonitions he had breathed, and some of his auditors indecently called on him to be silent.

18. The Pope's secretary, Poggius, in his letter *Ad Aretinum*, praises, in the warmest terms, the manner in which the prisoner spoke, and declares that, if he were sincere, he had committed no offence for which he ought to be questioned. The secretary, as may be easily conceived, was anything but favourable to the opinions entertained by Jerome, but, writing to a friend, he did not suffer his religious principles to warp his judgment or affect his regard to truth. The picture which he furnishes of the scene presented on this remarkable occasion, is so vividly drawn, that we cannot refrain from transcribing his interesting epistle. It is the more valuable as falling from the pen of one who was necessarily in the ranks of the martyr's enemies, but who, in the frankness and freedom of

private correspondence, could not refrain from expressing admiration of the man, though his principles he had never favoured, and was not then prepared to defend.

“ POGGIUS OF FLORENCE TO LEONARD ARETIN.

“ In the course of a short excursion into the country, I wrote to our common friend, from whom, I doubt not, you have had some account of me.

“ Since my return to Constance, my attention has been wholly engaged by Jerome the Bohemian heretic, as he is called. The ability and learning which this person has employed in his own defence are so extraordinary, that I cannot forbear giving you a short account of him.

“ To confess the truth, I never knew the art of speaking carried so nearly up to the model of ancient eloquence. It was indeed amazing to hear with what force of expression, with what fluency of language, and with what excellent reasoning he answered his adversaries; nor was I less struck with the gracefulness of his manner, the dignity of his action, and the firmness and constancy of his whole behaviour. It grieved me to think so great a man was labouring under a dreadful accusation. Whether it be a just one, God knows; for myself, I inquire not into the merits of it, resting satisfied with the decision of my superiors. But I will just give you a summary of his trial.

“After many articles had been proved against him, leave was at length given to him to answer each in its order. But Jerome long refused, strenuously insisting that he had many things to say previously in his defence, and that he ought first to be heard in general, before he descended to particulars. When this was overruled, ‘Here,’ said he, standing in the midst of the assembly—‘here is justice! here is equity! Beset by my enemies, I am already pronounced a heretic; I am condemned before I am examined. Were you gods omniscient, instead of an assembly of fallible men, you could not act with more sufficiency. Error is the lot of mortals, and you, exalted as you are, are not exempted from it. But consider, the higher you are exalted, the more dangerous are your errors. As for me, I know I am a wretch, below your notice; but at least consider, that an unjust action, in such an assembly, will be of dangerous example.’

“This, and much more, he spoke, with great elegance of language, in a very unruly and indecent assembly; and thus far, at least, he prevailed, that the Council, having ordered that he should first answer objections, consented that he should afterwards have liberty to speak on the whole question. Accordingly, all the articles urged against him were publicly read, and then proved, after which he was

asked whether he had aught to object to them? It is incredible with what acuteness he answered, and with what amazing dexterity he warded off every stroke of his adversaries. Nothing escaped him, and his whole behaviour was truly great and pious. If he were indeed the man his defence spake him, so far was he from meriting death, that, in my judgment, he was not in any degree culpable. He endeavoured to prove that the greater portion of the charges were purely the invention of his accusers. Among other things, being accused of hating and defaming the holy see, the Pope, the cardinals, the prelates, and the whole estate of the clergy, he stretched out his hands, and said, in a most moving accent, 'On which side, reverend fathers, shall I turn me for redress? whom shall I implore? whose assistance can I expect? which of you has not this malicious charge entirely alienated from me? which of you has it not changed from a judge into an inveterate enemy? It was artfully alleged, indeed; though other parts of their charge were of less moment, my accusers might well imagine, that, if this were fastened on me, it could not fail of drawing upon me the united indignation of my judges.'

“On the third day of this memorable trial, the former proceedings were recapitulated; when Jerome, having obtained leave, though with some difficulty, to speak, began by a prayer to God,

whose divine assistance he pathetically implored. He then observed that many excellent men in the annals of history had been oppressed by false witnesses, and condemned by unjust judges. Beginning with profane history, he instanced the death of Socrates, the captivity of Plato, the banishment of Anaxagoras, and the unmerited sufferings of many others. He then referred to the worthies of the Old Testament, in the same circumstances,—Moses, Joshua, Daniel, and almost all the prophets; and, lastly, those of the New Testament,—John the Baptist, St. Stephen, and others, who were condemned as seditious, profane, or immoral men. An unjust judgment, he said, proceeding from a layman, was evil; from a priest, worse; but from a General Council, superlatively bad. These things he delivered with a force and emphasis which kept every one's attention awake.

“On one point he dwelt largely. As the merits of the cause rested entirely on the credit of witnesses, he took great pains to show that very little was due to those produced against him. He had many objections to them, particularly their avowed hatred to him, the sources of which he so palpably laid open, that he made a strong impression upon the minds of his hearers, and not a little shook the character of the parties. The whole Council was moved, and greatly inclined to pity, if not to favour

him. He told them that he came uncompelled to Constance, and that neither his life nor doctrine had been such as to give him the least reason to dread an appearance before them. Varieties of opinion in matters of faith had ever arisen among learned men, and was always esteemed productive of truth rather than error, where bigotry was laid aside. Such, he said, was the difference between Austin and Jerome; and though their opinions were not only dissimilar, but contradictory, yet the imputation of heresy was never fixed on either.

19. "Every one expected that he would now retract his errors, or at least apologise for them; but nothing of the kind was heard from him: he declared plainly that he had nothing to retract. He launched out into a high encomium on John Huss, calling him a holy man, and lamenting his cruel and unjust death. He had armed himself, he added, with a full resolution to follow the steps of that blessed martyr, and to suffer with constancy whatever the malice of his enemies might inflict. 'The perjured witnesses,' said he, 'who have appeared against me, have won their cause; but let them remember that they have their evidence to give once more, before a tribunal where falsehood can be no disguise.'

"It was impossible to hear this pathetic speaker

without emotion. Every ear was captivated, and every heart touched. But wishes in his favour were vain : he threw himself beyond a possibility of mercy. Braving death, he even provoked the vengeance which was hanging over him. ‘ If that holy martyr,’ said he, speaking of Huss, ‘ used the clergy with disrespect, his censures were not levelled at them as priests, but as wicked men. He saw with indignation those revenues, which had been designed for charitable purposes, expended in pagantry, dissipation, and riot.’

“ Through the whole oration he showed a most amazing strength of memory. He had been confined almost a year in a dungeon, the severity of which he complained of, but, in the language of a great and good man, ‘ In this horrid place he was denied books and paper, but, notwithstanding that, and the constant anxiety which must have hung over him, he was at no more loss for proper authorities and quotations, than if he had spent the time at leisure in his study.’

“ His voice was sweet, distinct, and full ; his action every way the most proper, either to express indignation or to raise pity, though he made no affected appeal to the passions of his audience. Firm and intrepid he stood before the Council, collected in himself, and not merely contemning, but seeming to desire death. I speak not of his errors,

—let these rest with him. What I admired was his learning, his eloquence, and his acuteness. God knows whether these things were not the groundwork of his ruin!”

It is impossible to impeach this testimony, coming as it does from one who was opposed to the sufferer, and who acquiesced in the sentence pronounced against the heretic, though he pitied and admired the man.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONDEMNATION OF JEROME.

1. The Council is indignant at Jerome's unexpected conduct.—2. He prepares for death—Refuses again to recant.—3. The Council pronounce sentence.—4. He is doomed to the stake.—5. Jerome meets his fate with joyful courage.—6. Description of his final sufferings.—7. Inutility of religious persecution shown by the immediate consequences of Jerome's death.—8. Declaration in favour of his principles.—9. Rules laid down by the Council.

HAD Jerome been content to do what Poggius states all present expected from him,—that is, had he repeated his former confession,—so great was the impression made by his oration, that his fiercer pursuers would probably have been baffled, and his life spared; that life, however, could only have been prolonged, in his case, under all the irksomeness of public scorn and intolerable self-reproach.

1. On such terms the repentant Jerome disdained to survive. He had signed a document expressing his concurrence in the dreadful murder of his friend and master, John Huss, and he

now hastened to cleanse his bosom from the polluting stain. That honoured name he vindicated from the calumniating reproaches with which it had been attempted to sully it, and which he had been brought to authenticate. Huss, he declared, was ever a good, just, and holy man, and most unworthy of the death to which he had been doomed. He had proved himself an able and a faithful expounder of the gospel; and all he had written against the abuses, pomp, and dissolute lives of the prelates and clergy, he would maintain and uphold to the death. In the same spirit he defended the doctrines of Wickliffe. In conclusion, he sorrowfully declared, that, of all the sins he had ever committed in the course of his pilgrimage through life, none did so gnaw and trouble his conscience, as the one committed in that most pestiferous act, his recantation, when he had unjustly spoken against an upright and virtuous man and his doctrine, and especially in consenting to his wicked condemnation. The sinful deed, he now wished it to be known, he in the fullest manner desired utterly to revoke, as he had only made it, he said, "in that accursed place, from the weakness of his own faithless heart and the fear of a cruel death. Whatever he had spoken against that blessed martyr, John Huss, he loudly proclaimed to be altogether false, and he repented it with his whole heart."

For this intrepid declaration, the Council had been little prepared. He was interrupted by exclamations of surprise and displeasure, but they had not the effect of awing him into silence. On the contrary, he enlarged on the cruel injustice of the sentence executed on Huss, who had never maintained any doctrine against the state of the church, but had only offended their pride and avarice by exposing the excesses of the bishops, and fighting the battles of the poor. He contended that the church income, which they wasted in unprofitable luxuries, had been originally given, first, to relieve the distress of the needy; next, to enable the recipients of it to show proper and becoming hospitality; and, thirdly, to cover the expense of keeping churches and religious edifices in repair: and it was justly matter of grief to that good man, to behold the funds provided for such holy purposes squandered and thrown away on wicked courtezans, horses and dogs, great feasting, and gorgeous apparel. On these subjects, says Fox, "he showed himself marvellously eloquent—yea, never more."

To all who interrupted him in the way of comment, he gave ready answers: some of them were stinging in a more than ordinary degree. When it was attempted to drown his voice by clamour and tumult, he ceased to speak; and, waiting till those who offered such opposition had wearied

themselves, he called upon them still to give their attention to one whom they would, after that day, hear on earth no more. He, by such appeals, got new opportunities for resuming his speech, which he continued in the same clear and fearless strain, till he had expressed all he wished to say in answer to his accusers, and all that, as a penitent who had greatly sinned, he could utter to abate the load of remorse which his fatal recantation had heaped, in a moment of weakness, on a faithful, pious, but sinking heart.

Jerome was removed from the Council, and again returned to his prison, where all the torturing severities to which he had been formerly subjected were immediately renewed. The chains, which had been thrown aside, were again deemed necessary to secure the body of the relapsed heretic, and fetters were imposed on his hands and feet.

2. The persecutors could depress his body and control his actions, but they could not again overcome the constant heart of Jerome. A despised and persecuted captive, it was his to taste and exult in

“That bliss which only centres in the mind.”

He knew that his enemies could destroy his mortal frame, and to that violence he was content to submit. He had disburthened his conscience; he had, to the best of his ability, retraced his steps, and

undone the evil the stern monitor within reproached him for having worked in the church of God. He had vindicated, in the face of day, the injured fame of his beloved, lamented, and honoured friend; and thus—so he humbly hoped—rendered himself not wholly unworthy to follow him to that state of blessed repose which he confidently believed the subject of his affectionate veneration had gained. Consoled by these soothing persuasions, the gloom of his prison no longer appalled, his fetters seemed light, and he looked forward to the closing scene, not only without terror, but with a pious ambition to die in the cause of truth.

The consummation was not long delayed. On the following Saturday he was brought up for judgment. At an early hour in the morning he was escorted by a guard of soldiers to the cathedral church, and again admonished on the sinfulness of the heresies of which he had been proved guilty, and exhorted to recall what he had lately done, to renounce his grievous errors, and, in that case, he might yet hope for mercy. He was especially required to forsake the new doctrines, and concur in the condemnation which had been pronounced against the accursed Wickliffe, and his devoted follower Huss. He was pressed on this subject to no purpose. “I take God to witness,” said he, “that I believe and hold all the articles of the faith

of the holy Catholic Church as the church itself doth hold and believe them; but never, never will I consent to the condemnation of those blessed ministers who have been named." He added, "They have been most sinfully doomed by you, because they virtuously opposed the pomp, and vanity, and wicked abominations which had dishonoured the church."

Cold and impenetrable as is the heart of man, when steeled against his fellow by the virulence of superstition, the animated language of Jerome was not lost even on the Council. Among its members, there were some who felt disposed to stop short of the last severity. They honoured the learning of Jerome, and admired his astonishing powers; but the feeling thus excited in his favour was soon stifled by the voice of authority, which saw its own special interests exposed to the most imminent danger, if a reformer so highly gifted were suffered to live, to make war on the vices of that corrupted system which the chief members of the Council, in the plenitude of their pretended devotion to the glory of the living God, were eager to uphold.

3. It was soon resolved to follow, in every respect, the precedent established by the case of John Huss. Again did the Bishop of Lodi desecrate the pulpit, by ascending it to call for the

death of a helpless prisoner : again did he press on his congregation that “ the body of sin must be destroyed ;” and that, to gain the special favour of a merciful Deity, another victim must be barbarously immolated,—for this was the result which he knew would follow the condemnation he maintained it had become the duty of that assembly to pronounce.

Jerome does not appear to have entertained the slightest hope of being spared. When the bishop concluded, he again addressed the Council, and declared that, if they proceeded to condemnation, they would, in the eye of the Almighty, be guilty of passing an unjust sentence. He called upon them to reflect on the step they were about to take, and warned them that, when he should be no more, his unmerited fate would assuredly subject his judges to all the horrors of remorse, and prove a nail in their hearts. He impressively added—“ I cite you all that you shall answer to me in the presence of the Most High Judge, ere a century shall have passed away.”

The form of inviting recantation was again resorted to, but without effect. The prisoner had too deeply mourned his former error to repeat it, though instant death, with all its horrors, was presented to his view. The attempt to move his resolution was at length abandoned, and the Council

proceeded to deliver their sentence in the following terms :—

“ In the name of God, Amen. Christ, our God and our Saviour, being the true vine, whose Father is the husbandman, taught his disciples and all the faithful men, saying, ‘ If any man dwell not in me, let him be cast out as a bough or branch, and let him wither and dry;’ the doctrine of which most excellent doctor and master, this most sacred Synod of Constance, executing and following in the cause of inquisition against heretics, being moved through report, public fame, and open information, proceedeth against Master Jerome, of Prague, layman. By the acts and processes of the cause, it appeareth that the said Master Jerome hath holden, maintained, and taught divers erroneous and heretical articles, lately reprovèd and condemned by the holy fathers; some being very blasphemous, others offending godly ears, and many wicked and seditious doctrines having been affirmed, maintained, preached, and taught, by those men of most damnable memory, John Wickliffe and John Huss, the which are written in divers of their works and books; which articles of doctrine, and books, of the said John Wickliffe and John Huss, together with their memory, and the person of the said John Huss, were, by the said sacred synod, condemned for heresy, which sen-

tence of condemnation the said Jerome, afterward, during the time of inquisition, acknowledged in the said sacred synod, and approved the true Catholic and Apostolic faith, thereto consenting, accursing all heresy, and especially that whereof he was accused, and confessed himself to be accused, and which, in times past, John Wickliffe and John Huss had maintained and taught in their works, sermons, and books, and for the which the said John Wickliffe and John Huss, together with their doctrines and errors, were, by the said sacred Council, condemned as heretical, and the condemnation of which the said Jerome did openly profess to allow, and did swear that he would persevere and continue in the verity of that faith, and, if that he should presume at any time to hold opinions or preach contrary thereto, that he would submit himself to the trial and truth of the canons, and be bound to perpetual punishment. And this his profession, written with his own hand, he delivered up to the holy Council. Many days after his said profession and abjuration, as a dog returns to his vomit, to the intent that he might vomit up the most pestilent poison which had long lurked and slept hidden in his breast, he required and desired that he might again be heard before the Council; the which being granted to him, he affirmed, said, and professed, before the whole

synod publicly gathered together, that he had wickedly consented and agreed to the sentence and judgment of the condemnation of the said John Wickliffe and John Huss, and that he had most shamefully lied in allowing and approving of the said sentence, neither was he ashamed to confess that he had lied: yea, he did also revoke and recant his confession, approbation, and protestation, which he had made upon their condemnation, affirming that he never at any time had read any heresies in the treatises or books of the said John Wickliffe and John Huss, albeit he had before confessed it; and it is evidently proved that he did diligently study, read, and preach their books, wherein it is manifest that there are contained many errors and heresies. Further, the said Jerome did profess, as touching the sacrament of the altar, and the transubstantiation of the bread into the body of Christ, that he doth hold and believe as the church doth hold and believe; saying, also, that he doth give more credit to St. Augustin, and the other doctors of the church, than to Wickliffe and Huss. It appeareth, moreover, by the premises, that the said Jerome is an adherent and maintainer of the said Wickliffe and Huss, and their errors, and both is and hath been a favourer of them; wherefore, the said sacred synod determineth the said Jerome, of Prague, as a rotten

and withered branch, not growing on the vine, shall be cut off and cast out. The said synod also pronounceth, declareth, and condemneth him as a heretic; and as one drowned in all kinds of heresies, he is to be excommunicated and accursed, leaving him to the arbitrement and judgment of the secular judge, to receive, from the same, just and due punishment, according to the quality of so great an offence. The said sacred Council, notwithstanding, entreat that the said judge will so moderate his sentence, that the said Jerome may be dealt with without peril of his life."

4. The affected display of compassion, at the close of their award, was in fine keeping with the hypocritical assumption of superior piety which had marked all the former proceedings of the Council. To pretend it was their wish that the life of Jerome should be spared, after so long pursuing him with rancorous fury, was a farce, which, but for its atrocious perfidy, would be exquisitely entertaining. Right well did they know the effect of their decision. By excommunicating and accursing, they did all that was necessary to remove an enemy so formidable, from his virtues, as well as his eloquence. They knew it was the signal for death, and that his fate was sealed.

Those members of the Council who did not wish that Jerome should perish at the stake, apart from

any touch of humanity which might influence, felt it was of great importance to the church itself not to proceed to the last severity. After yielding as he had done, after the ample confession he had made, to detain Jerome in prison a moment was a violation of the agreement into which the parties had entered. To proceed to the monstrous length of depriving him of life, was, in their judgment, to assail the church itself; for who could hope it would, from that date, command obedience, if after this fashion submission were to be required? But these reflections, though they had great weight with the reflecting few, were urged in vain to the exasperated many. Their enemy was in their hands; they thirsted for vengeance, and were determined that he should expiate his past offences against them with his life. Even while the sentence was being passed, and, indeed, it would appear, during some days before, active preparations were making for his martyrdom. Nor was it enough that the hated victim was to perish in horrible torture,—coarse buffoonery was to be connected with the bloody deed, and hideous burlesque made the accompaniment of brutal murder. A coarse, uncouth, and ridiculous likeness of John Huss, was carved, and fixed in the ground as a stake, to which Jerome, when brought out to suffer, was to be chained. This could not have been devised and executed on

the spur of the moment. Cruelty must have deliberated very gravely on the subject, before such a union of the dreadful and the grotesque could have been contrived and advanced to completion.

5. Jerome was led from the church to the spot on which he was to suffer, on the 23rd of May, 1416. He had endured too much, and had too lively a view of the celestial felicity which by faith he hoped was about to become his portion for ever, to feel grieved at the termination of his earthly pilgrimage. Far from seeming in the least dejected, he became more cheerful than he had previously been, and, with an unclouded countenance, and a clear strong voice, when he saw the preparations for his death, he commenced singing *Credo in unum Deum*. Such joyous serenity, on the threshold of the grave, or on the verge of the fire which was to consume the form to which malice denied a grave, inspired general surprise, and offered another sublime proof of the possibility of a guileless spirit, even before it has thrown off the enfeebling trammels of mortality, rising superior to death.

The awful procession moved on. No attention was paid to the recommendation of the Council to spare the life of the prisoner. It was known that those from whom that suggestion came could in no case be satisfied with anything less than his death.

While the wooden caricature of the murdered Huss was being carved, a cap was prepared, similar to the one which had been placed on the head of that victim, exhibiting representations of the devil, according to the ideas formed of him in that age. This cap, or "mitre," as the martyrologist calls it, he was compelled to wear. A vain effort to wound! for a mind like his derived comfort rather than grief from the affront. Taking it from the hands of the executioner, he contentedly put it on, exclaiming, as John Huss had done before him, "The Lord Jesus, my Saviour, when he was about to suffer on the cross for wretched sinners like me, wore a crown of thorns; and I will not repine that in his cause I am required to wear this cap."

6. The strain of exalted devotion which he commenced on his way to execution, he calmly continued, singing hymns appropriate to the circumstances in which he found himself. Passing the gate of the city, towards Gottlehem, he began "*Felix namque*;" and, while yet singing, he drew near the awful pile. He saw the fearful arrangements, now at the point of completion, but saw them without emotion: he beheld the figure of the holy man whom he was about to follow, and, imitating his conduct in the last stage of his suffering, devoutly fell on his knees, and humbly implored that the God he had coveted to serve would grant him

fortitude during the awful trial which remained for him, that, unyielding to sinful temptation, and undismayed by all that hatred, hypocrisy, and fanatical intolerance could marshal against him, he might peaceably pass to his eternal home above the skies, through "the valley of the shadow of death."

He had scarcely finished his prayer when the executioners drew near, and proceeded to commence their dreadful duty, by removing his upper garments. He assisted the operation with his own hands, and that cheerfully, and with as much composure as if he had only been undressing for bed. A linen cloth was thrown round him, and, besides being chained, he was bound with wet cords to the stake. Great logs of wood, with straw thrust through them, were then piled up to his breast. He tranquilly gazed on what was doing; but, absorbed in spiritual exercises, the fatal preparations inspired no terror. Aware that but a few instants remained to him, he again sang the hymn *Credo in unum Deum*. Immediately after this, looking anxiously around, and addressing himself to the crowd, he said—

"Dearly beloved brethren, even as I have now sung do I believe, and no otherwise, and this creed is my whole faith. I die because I will not agree with the Council, and affirm that my master, John Huss, was by them justly and holily condemned.

That could I never do with a safe conscience, for assuredly I do know that he was a true preacher of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The fagots were then piled up till they were even with the crown of his head, and his clothes were thrown on them. He was still able to see what was doing; and when the executioner, having the light in his hand, went behind, that the victim might not look on him while he kindled the consuming flame, "Come hither," said Jerome, "and apply the light before my eyes, for, had I feared such a sight, I should never have come here, having had sufficient opportunities to escape." The murderous torch was then used, and in a few moments the ascending fire encompassed the determined martyr, who, still intrepid, seemed to glory in his fate, and again raised his voice, to sing, in a joyous but solemn strain, *In manus tuas Domine, commendo spiritum meum*; and as the fury of the devouring element increased, he was heard to offer this parting prayer:—

"O Lord God, Father Almighty! have mercy upon me, and pardon my past offences, for thou knowest how sincerely I have loved thy truth!"

His lips continued to move, and the departing spirit seemed still to be engaged in humble supplication to the Eternal; but the increased fury of the fire, and his failing strength, made it impossible to

hear more. His bodily sufferings were painfully protracted. When the torch was first applied, the blaze rose rapidly, and in a few moments he was surrounded by a sheet of fire. The wind caused it to part, and then was seen his head and his hair burning, and his body, attacked by the unsparing element, exhibited a multitude of bladders, some of the size of an egg; yet, it is added, "he strongly and stoutly moved his head and mouth by the space almost of one quarter of an hour, while one might easily have gone from St. Clement's over the bridge unto Our Lady church, he was of such a stout and strong nature." During this fearfully long period of endurance, it was thought he retained his senses, but no cry of agony or manifestation of despondency was noted. This statement is not made on the partial representations of his friends, who might be suspected of a disposition to suppress any indication of weakness that appeared to them to sully the brightness of his exit. Poggius reports to that effect. He was among the spectators of the burning, and thus sums up what he observed of the sufferer's deportment.

"So died this *prodigious* man. The epithet is not extravagant. I was myself an eyewitness of his whole behaviour. Whatever his life may have been, his death, without doubt, furnishes a noble lesson of philosophy. I was an eyewitness to that

catastrophe, and beheld every act. I know not whether it was obstinacy or incredulity that moved him, but his death was like that of one of the philosophers of antiquity. Mutius Scævola placed his hand in the flame, and Socrates drank the poison, with less firmness and spontaneous good will, than Jerome seemed to exhibit while presenting his body to the torturing fire."

7. When life was extinct, the straw bed on which he had been permitted to repose, during that period when his imprisonment was least severe, and the miserable coverlid belonging to it, were brought with his hood and boots, and thrown into the fire, that they might be consumed with the remains of his corpse, and saved from being converted into honoured relics. Indifferent spectators, who lingered near the fire, seemed affected when his wretched couch was produced. The evidence it afforded of the vengeful and inhuman harshness, with which he had been visited before conviction, might well have waked in every countenance "the blushes of ingenuous shame," where maddening bigotry had not succeeded in annihilating all the finer feelings, all the best emotions of human nature. The ashes of Jerome were collected, as those of his master had been, and thrown into the Rhine, whose waters will cease to flow, ere the cruel and criminal superstitions

which he opposed shall again be established in all the pride of tyranny, which, up to his time, had been successfully maintained, and which pride and avarice now vainly strove to uphold by the shedding of innocent blood.

In all ages spiritual tyranny has been taught this lesson,—that, where argument is of no effect, cruelty cannot prevail. God has ordained that the human mind shall not be permanently controlled by outrage. The opinions of Huss, and his friend and fellow-martyr, had gained a hold on the understandings of their countrymen, which was not to be done away by their untimely removal from the scene of their generous exertions.

8. The word had gone forth, and the impression created by it was one which could not be destroyed by violence, or defaced by time. It warmed and animated all classes. The opinions of Wickliffe and Huss were not only favoured by the illiterate vulgar, but the noble and the learned moved in their cause. Besides the Baron de Chlume, fifty-four nobles vindicated the fame of John Huss, and attempted, ere it was too late, to save the life of the persecuted Jerome. Their letter, addressed to the Council, contains a manly condemnation of the cruelty in which that arrogant body had indulged. The opening paragraphs of it will not be out of their place here. It was

entitled "The letter of the fifty-four nobles of Moravia."

"Forasmuch as every man, both by the law of nature and also by God's law, is commanded to do that unto another man which he would have done unto himself, and is forbidden to do that thing unto another which he would not have done unto himself, as our Saviour saith, 'All things whatsoever ye will that men should do unto you, the same do you unto them, for this is the law and the prophets.' Yea, the law is fulfilled in this one point, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' We, therefore, God being our author, having respect, as much as in us lieth, unto the said law of God, and the love of our neighbour, did send before our letters unto Constance, in behalf of our dearly beloved friend of good memory, Master John Huss, Bachelor of Divinity, and preacher of the gospel, whom of late, in the Council of Constance, we know not by what spirit being led, you have condemned as an obstinate heretic, neither being lawfully convicted, as were expedient if he had been guilty, and having no errors or heresies laid against him, but at the sinister, false, and importunate accusations, suggestions, and instigations of his mortal enemies, and the traitors of our kingdom and marquisate of Moravia. Being thus unjustly condemned, you have slain him with

a most shameful and cruel death ; to the perpetual shame and infamy of our most Christian kingdom of Bohemia, and the famous marquisate of Moravia, as we have written to Constance, to the most noble Prince and Lord the Lord Sigismund, King of the Romans and of Hungary, the heir and successor of our kingdom, the which was also read and published in your congregations, which we will here also have enrolled ; and have burnt him, as it is reported, in reproach and in contempt of us.

“Wherefore, we have thought good even to direct our letters patent to your reverences now present, in the behalf of Master John Huss, openly professing and protesting, both with heart and mouth, that he, the said John Huss, was a just, good, and catholic man, and for a long season worthily commended and allowed, in our kingdom, for his life and conversation. He also taught us and our subjects the law of the gospel and of the holy prophets, and the books of the Old and New Testament, according to the exposition of the holy doctors approved by the church, and left many monuments in writing, most constantly detesting and abhorring all errors and heresies, continually admonishing both us and all faithful Christians to do the like, diligently exhorting all men, as much as in him lay, by his word, writings, and labours, unto quietness and concord : so that, using

all the diligence that we might, we never heard, or could understand, that Master John Huss had preached, taught, or by any means affirmed, any error or heresy in his sermons, or that by any means he had offended us or our subjects, either by word or deed, but that he always led a quiet and a godly life in Christ, exhorting all men diligently, both by his words and works, as much as he might, to observe and keep the law of the gospel, and the institutions of the holy fathers, after the preaching of our holy mother the church, and to the edifying of men's souls. Neither did these premises, which you had so perpetrated, to the reproach both of us and our kingdom and marquisate, suffice and content you, but that, also, without any mercy and pity, you have apprehended, imprisoned, and condemned, and, even now, peradventure, like as you did Master John Huss, you have most cruelly murdered, the worshipful man, Master Jerome, of Prague, a man abounding in eloquence, master of the liberal arts, and a famous philosopher, not being seen, heard, examined, neither convicted, but only on the sinister and false accusation of his and our accusers and betrayers."

The letter proceeded to vindicate the writers and the marquisate of Moravia from certain charges which had been preferred. For this the nobles were cited by the Council, and reproved by the emperor.

He, however, did not disdain to attempt a defence of his own conduct, by stating, in reply to the letter, that the course taken against John Huss had not been taken with his approbation.

9. Among the lower classes a very strong feeling, unfavourable to the Council, had sprung up. Songs, in derision of its proceedings, were composed, and became popular; and these must have been either very numerous or remarkably effective, as the Council did not think it beneath its dignity to notice them in certain laws and articles which it put forth shortly after the death of Jerome. Among the orders, or resolutions, so promulgated, we find it declared—

“That all masters, doctors, and priests, shall be sworn to abjure the doctrine of Wickliffe and Huss.

“That all they, who, being cited, would not appear, should also be sworn to abjure; and those who did not appear, contemning the censure of the keys, should have process against them, and be punished.

“That all such laymen as had defended John Wickliffe and John Huss should swear to defend them no more, and to approve the doings of the Council, and the condemnation of John Huss.

“That such as had been promoters, in the Council, against John Huss, should be permitted safely to return to Bohemia, and to enjoy their benefices.

“That the treatises of John Wickliffe, translated into the Bohemian tongue by John Huss and Jacobellus, should be brought to the ordinary.

“That the treatises of John Huss, condemned in the Council, should also be brought to the ordinary.

“That all *songs* and *ballads* made to the prejudice of the Council, and of the Catholic persons of both states, should be forbidden to be sung in cities, towns, and villages, under great and extreme punishment.

“That all and singular, either spiritual or secular, that shall preach, teach, hold, or maintain the opinions and articles of John Wickliffe, John Huss, and Jerome, in this Council condemned and convicted of the same, shall be holden for heretics, and, falling in relapse after recantation, shall be burned.”

These, with many other strict rules, were put forth by the authority of the Council. It is to be regretted that none of the songs and ballads which were honoured with such a special mark of condemnation at Constance, have descended to us. They probably contained some pungent satire, which was the more felt and resented, as it was richly deserved. Of the manner in which the selfishness, pomp, and avarice of the church were ordinarily satirised, a specimen is given in the first volume.

The truth is, the domineering, grasping, and intolerant spirit of the church of Rome of that day, had outraged all who did not participate in the large supplies exacted from credulity and fear. The bishops, seeing their power had long survived, notwithstanding the disgust it had inspired, began to flatter themselves that it rested on a rock, and would endure for ever. A few terrible examples, they confidently believed, were all that were wanted to arrest the march of innovation and reform; and when they were undeceived in this respect, when they found that blood had flowed in vain, instead of suspecting that that spirit which they fiercely strove to subdue was invincible, they persuaded themselves that the fault was in the quality of the sufferers, and that nobler and more distinguished men must be sacrificed, to uphold what they called "the sacred fabric of the holy Catholic Church." The experiment was tried, but with little effect, or, rather, with any effect but that which they desired to produce. Persecution, unhappily, is slow to learn, even from experience; and the increase and spread of that impatience of the sway of a tyrannical priesthood, and of those abuses which John Huss and his beloved scholar had lived to oppose,—in a word, the growing spirit of reform in Bohemia, failed to teach the unbending prelates of England moderation, or to cause them less eagerly

than before to seek the destruction of Lord Cobham.

They were perhaps more anxious for such a sacrifice in consequence of what had occurred at Constance. Pride does not content itself with merely striving for that which it is difficult to gain or desirable to possess ; it sometimes covets what must leave behind an indelible stain. In this case, the bishops of England felt, that, as two distinguished reformers had been put to death at Constance, it was especially desirable that their country should boast of one such sacrifice, to maintain that position which she claimed to hold in Christendom. The ecclesiastical principle established at Constance they were anxious to sustain by an equally energetic demonstration in London.

The zeal of the persecutors was not abated by the modest deportment of the persecuted. Like the Huguenots at a later period, the reformers of this date, far from uniformly confessing defeat, in many cases took a triumphant, and even a menacing tone. While they poured bitter condemnation on the malice, they failed not to visit the follies of their adversaries with stinging ridicule. Their numbers were felt to be on the increase, and the plaudits of so vast a body as had now been formed were worth risking something for ; and it is not improbable that the enterprises undertaken in the

cause of heavenly things were often productive of earthly profit. Bold satires were launched, in reprobation of the corrupt manners of the priests, more frequently than ever. They were occasionally written in verse, and during the night many copies of them were affixed on the doors and windows of the clergy, and on the city gates. These became the subject of angry complaint, and Walsingham speaks of them as treasonable. At that period, whatever gave serious alarm to the church was regarded, by those most immediately interested in repressing the evil, as clearly indicating disaffection to the king and his government.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LORD COBHAM'S FINAL PERSECUTIONS AND DEATH.

1. Lord Cobham in exile.—2. Continues to pursue the Lollards.—3. "The Lanthorn of Light."—4. Persecution of Cleydon.—5. Robert Holbech Chapel, Lord Cobham's chaplain, advocates church reform.—6. He is pursued by the bishops, and reads his recantation at Paul's Cross.—7. Lord Cobham's butler compelled to recant.—8. False reports of Cobham's designs.—9. Lord Powis seeks to capture Cobham, and succeeds after a desperate struggle.—10. Lord Cobham brought from Wales to London.—11. He defends himself before the House of Peers.—12. Encounters great reproach and contumely.—13. He is ordered for execution.—14. Thanks of the House of Peers voted to Lord Powis.—15. Lord Cobham, undismayed, prepares to die.—16. False reports of his behaviour.—17. He is hanged and burnt at Tyburn.

IN order to give, without interruption, the history of the persecution endured by John Huss and Jerome of Prague, some points have been suffered to escape, which, chronologically, ought sooner to have been noted. The narrative now turns more particularly to describe the course pursued in England by the defenders of the church.

The condemnation at the Council of Constance of the opinions of Wickliffe of course gave great content to the most ardent opponents of Lollardy, but not to the nation generally. The memorable decree, that "the body and bones of Wickliffe were to be taken from the ground, and thrown far away from the burial of any church," was not very promptly obeyed. Eventually, the remains of the reformer were disinterred and burnt, and the ashes cast into the adjoining brook. "The brook," Fuller observes, "did convey his ashes into Avon; Avon into Severn; Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." At all events, that piece of vengeful folly did not arrest the progress of it in England.

1. While those mournful scenes just described, and which are interesting from their connexion with the triumph of Wickliffe's opinions, were being acted, Lord Cobham remained in exile. In this melancholy situation, he could have conversed with few of his old companions, but he had many friends. Of his family nothing is recorded. Lady Cobham is never found near him in his troubles; and it does not appear that he had any children, to tremble for the dangers to which their parent was exposed. Though, at the distance of four hundred

years, much may be supposed to have existed of which no record can be found, it is but reasonable to conclude, that, if he had had any surviving offspring at the time of his misfortunes, that fact, which might have assuaged or proved an important ingredient in the bitter draught prepared for him, by the circumstances of the period, would have been duly recorded. One daughter, named Joane, was born to him, but she died in her infancy.

If Cobham were spared the affliction of seeing the prospects of a rising family blighted and marred, by the course which his conscience forced him to take, his situation was still sufficiently distressing. He knew that a vast reward was offered for his apprehension, and, however confident he might be of the good faith of his followers generally, he could never feel perfectly secure that one Judas would not be found among them, or that one spy from the enemy's camp might not impose upon their penetration, and obtain possession of the all-important secret of the place of his concealment. Besides the loss of those personal comforts, which, in happier times, he might have justly valued, he had the mortification to know that in him the march of that sacred cause which he had always laboured to advance, was arrested. Denied the solace of being useful, he saw the iron hand of power busily at work, driving back from the truth those who had shared his hopes.

Though intelligence of what was doing in foreign parts did not travel then “on the wings of the wind,” or by means of an agency surpassing in swiftness the wind itself, he was not long in gaining tidings of the cruel acts of the Council of Constance. In John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, he had to deplore the loss of two pious friends; and the fierce violence beneath which those virtuous men had fallen, he knew to have been stimulated and inflamed by what he himself had done, with a view to a very different result. The knowledge of facts so melancholy sat heavy on his heart, while he reflected that no time could repair the wrong; and he was not only impotent to avenge their fate, had such been his desire, but wholly incapable of defending himself.

Yet, firm to the principles he had avowed, it never occurred to him to consider, whether he might not avert the impending danger, by yielding in some respects to his enemies. He knew that the opinions of Wickliffe had been condemned in the fifteenth session of the Council of Constance, and the bones of the reformer ordered to be torn from the sepulchre in which for many years they had rested, in order to be burnt. While this told him that the opponents of reformation had now greater strength than ever, it failed to satisfy his mind that the decision come to, any more than

the sentences pronounced, against the two sufferers, deserved respect. He was convinced that cruelty, injustice, and impiety, were mingled with all their proceedings, and that their fierce decrees had not for their real object to vindicate the true worship of God, but to sustain those abuses which degraded it, and which were to them an unfailling source of profit.

2. Chichely was most firmly bent on putting down the new opinions. Of the severities which he countenanced, too many proofs remain. The remarkable case of one unfortunate person is not very generally known, on account of the humble circumstances of the sufferer. It will be found curious, from the view which it affords of the then condition of English literature.

3. In the year 1415 a book found great favour among the disciples of Wickliffe, called “The Lanthorn of Light.” It was widely circulated, almost as widely as possible, bearing in mind the limited means which then existed for making a work of merit known. Printing, though there are reasons for believing the art then existed, had certainly not been brought into common use. Copies of “The Lanthorn of Light,” however, fairly written, were multiplied and handed about among the reformers, and were so valued that even godly persons, who could not read, desired to obtain the trea-

sure. A citizen of little note, named Cleydon, had possessed himself of this much-admired work, and several other manuscripts.

4. By some treachery the fact was made known to the authorities, and, in consequence, he was arrested by the Lord Mayor of London, and on the 17th of August, 1415, brought before Chichely for examination. Cleydon had long been suspected of heresy. He frankly owned that for twenty years he had laboured under the imputation; and, while Braybrook was Bishop of London, he had suffered five years' imprisonment—two in the prison of Conwey, and three in the Fleet; and had only been released on abjuring his error, which he did before Lord Chancellor Scarle, in the time of King Henry the Fourth. The abjuration he had repeated before Bishop Arundel, the immediate predecessor of Chichely. He declared that he had sincerely renounced the errors with which he had been charged, and avoided the society of those who were known to entertain them. He was then asked "what books he had in his house, written in the English language?" Cleydon could not deny the fact that he had many, which were seized when he was taken into custody. "The Lanthorn of Light" was produced as one of them, and he admitted that he was well acquainted with the work. At considerable expense he had procured

the copy then exhibited. The author was a person named John Grime. Cleydon, severely as he had previously suffered, had recourse to no subterfuge to elude punishment. He might with some plausibility have pleaded ignorance of the contents of the most obnoxious of the works discovered on his premises, as, whatever his sentiments on matters of religion, he was not likely to offend by perusing the Bible, or any other prohibited book, as it was in his power to prove that he had never learned to read.

Unable to penetrate its meaning himself, parts of it Cleydon had heard, and approved of them, as tending to his eternal welfare. Upon this, Robert Gilbert, D.D., and William Linwood, D.L.L., were ordered to examine "The Lanthorn of Light," with the other books found in the house of the accused. They proceeded in their work with such diligence, that, on the Monday following, they, and the reverend coadjutors appointed to assist in the inquiry, made their report—a report most unfavourable to Cleydon, as in substance it set forth that the works submitted to them contained many heretical articles; and their piety had been shocked at finding it represented in them "that the parable of the tares was interpreted to signify those corrupt decrees which the Pope had sown among the laws of Christ;—that the archbishoprics and bishoprics

were the seats of the beast Antichrist;—that the bishop's licence to preach the word of God was the true character of Antichrist, and any faithful priest might preach without it;—that the court of Rome was the head; the bishops the body; the monks, friars, and canons, no other than the venomous tail;—that no reprobate was a member of the church, but only such as were elected and predestinate to salvation;—that the frequent singing in church was not founded on scripture, and that therefore the priests should not employ themselves in it, but in preaching the word;—that there ought not to be splendid and pompous ornaments in churches;—that Judas did receive the body of Christ in bread, and his blood in wine; and therefore, after consecration, the same bread and wine which was before did remain on the altar;—that ecclesiastical suffrages did profit all virtuous and godly persons indifferently;—that the Pope's and bishops' indulgences were vain and insignificant;—that the laity were not obliged to obey the prelates in all their demands;—that adoration of images, or paying any reverence to them, was unlawful; and that no pilgrimages ought to be made to them."

This report sealed the doom of the unfortunate Cleydon. His guilt, in being the proprietor of such books,—which, be it remembered, though

written in the English language, he could not read,—was held to be unpardonable. The archbishop pronounced the awful definitive sentence, that he had relapsed into his abjured heresy, and his books and himself were ordered to be burned. The holy zeal of Chichely could not accord mercy to the unhappy man, and he was delivered over to the secular power. His sentence was executed in Smithfield, where, says Fox, “he was made a burnte offeryng unto the Lord.”

5. But such a sacrifice, however grateful in itself to those who ordered it, was not sufficiently striking to vindicate the faith which was thus to be upheld. Lest others “should be infected with his scab,” as set forth in his judgment, it was necessary to make an example of some eminent reformer, whose name and station might proclaim that none were so exalted as to be above the reach of the dignitaries of the church.

The bishops and clergy of England were mortified beyond description at finding all attempts to make Cobham their prisoner from time to time defeated. To prove that they were not inactive, they consoled themselves, as well as they might, by attacking all who were known to have actively favoured his views, or to have been in any way personally connected with him. One of these was Robert Holbech Chapel. This gentleman was in

holy orders, and had been chaplain to Lord Cobham when he was in the enjoyment of wealth, power, and high consideration. After the cry was raised against the Lollards, and the opinions of Cobham were denounced, a sentence of excommunication was pronounced against Chapel. He saw the contempt with which the minions of Arundel were treated by his patron, and, believing himself safe under so powerful a protector, did not pay more respect to the steps taken against himself. While under sentence, he continued to preach and to say mass, and made no overture for a reconciliation. He preached before Lord Cobham, at Cowling, after the citation had been exhibited on the gates of Rochester cathedral, and at other places, as if no exception had been taken to his actions.

6. Now that the friend whose countenance had emboldened, and whose means had sustained him, was in disgrace and exile, and a price set on his head, it was judged advisable to visit Chapel with the vengeance of the bishops. He was denounced as refractory, at St. Paul's Cross, and, some time afterwards, he was apprehended and brought before a convocation of the clergy, which, in the summer of 1416, Chichely had thought it desirable to assemble in London. The object of this convocation is very distinctly stated in a document called

“ A Constitution,” issued in the course of its session, which set forth that—

“ Lately, in our last convocation in St. Paul’s Church, London, being kept by you and other our brethren” (this paper was addressed by the primate to the Bishop of London) “ and clergy of our province, we do remember to have made the order under-written by your consentes, when, as among many other our cares, this ought to be the chief, that, by some means, we take those heretics, which, lyke foxes, lurk and hide themselves in the Lordes vineyard ; and that the dust of negligence may be utterly shaken from our feet, and from the feet of our fellow-brethren. In this, the said convocation of the prelates and clergy, we have ordeyned that all our fellow-brethren, our suffragans and archdeacons of our province of Canterbury, by themselves, their officials, or commissioners, in all their jurisdictions and every of their charges in the country—twice every year at the least—do diligently inquire of such persons as are suspect of heresy.’ ”

Nor was this all. Not only was inquiry to be made after all offenders, once in every six months, but, in every archdeaconry, in every parish, where heretics were reported to be found, the authorities were to cause three or more of “ the honestest men, and best reported of, to take their oath, upon the

holy Evangelists, that, if they should know or understand any frequenting, either in privy conventicles, or otherwise differing in life and manners from the common conversation of other Catholic men, or they held any heresies or errors, or possessed any suspected books in the English language, or that they received any persons suspected of heresies or errors, certificates were to be forwarded of the same, in order that lawful process might be issued against the guilty or suspected parties."

And, further, it was directed, that the presumed transgressors should be committed to "perpetual or temporal prisons," as the case might require, till the next convocation of the prelates and clergy of the province, during which time inquisition was to be made into their past life; and how they had behaved under the process was to be reported: those who were so evil disposed as to have an opinion of their own, and to think that they had a right to act on that opinion, by possessing themselves of a sacred book, written in a language which they could read, or easily get read to them, and, so feeling, proved refractory at being accused of crime, and imprisoned, of course, were to be severely dealt with; but the humble minded, who were prepared to "kiss the rod," and affect penitence, might hope for gentler treatment. The reader of the nineteenth,

will not envy the liberty enjoyed by his forefathers who lived in the fifteenth century, under the indulgent sway of such a spiritual teacher as Archbishop Chichely!

It must not be supposed that the perpetrators of these outrages pretended to be other than friendly to liberty. While oppression was most rife, and judicial violence ever ready to crush the conscientious worshipper who had embraced the reformed faith, the established church was reverentially pointed to, as the best and noblest bulwark of freedom. Of what avail, it was asked, would the generous labours of the brave ancestors of those who lived at this period have proved, had they not been supported by the awful thunders of the church? It was these, according to the monks and their patrons, that had preserved the land from slavery. They especially referred to the sentence of curse pronounced by the bishops against the breakers of the Great Charter, forty years after it was obtained from John. This took place in Westminster Hall, May 3rd, 1254, and in presence of King Henry the Third and many of the nobility. It was then declared, that, "By the authority of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and of the glorious mother of God, and perpetual Virgin, Mary; of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of all apostles, and of all

martyrs ; of blessed King Edward King of England, and of all the saints of Heaven ;”—in these awful and revered names, all those were declared “excommunicated, accursed, and cut off from the benefits of Mother Church, while all were sequestered who might thereafter deprive the church of her right, and all those that, by any craft or wiliness, might violate, break, diminish, or change the church’s liberties and free customs, contained in the charters of the common liberties, and of the forest, granted by the king to the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of England, and, likewise, to the earls, barons, knights, and other freeholders of the realm, and all that, secretly or openly, by deed, word, or counsel, do make statutes, or observe them being made, and that bring in customs, or that keep them being brought in, against the said liberties, or any of them, the writers, lawmakers, counsellors, and executors of them, and all those that shall presume to judge against them.” This comprehensive curse, directed not only against those who might frame laws not in accordance with the principles of liberty, but against those who should obey them, the judges who should administer them, and the executioners who should carry their sentences into effect,—this, was proudly quoted as the main prop of British freedom—as that which had alone upheld, and would continue to uphold, the

mighty advantages bestowed on the country by Magna Charta.

Before the convocation from which the constitution which has been mentioned emanated, Chapel was brought. It was charged against him, that he, being the chaplain of Lord Cobham, and under sentence of excommunication, had, for several years, "in contempt of the keys," continued to preach and say mass, never caring to seek a reconciliation with the church. He denied that he was at all aware that sentence of excommunication had passed against him. A copy of the sentence, which had been prepared by Bishop Roff, and afterwards pronounced from Paul's Cross, was then produced and read. This proceeding took place in the month of May, and it was thought right to allow Chapel some weeks to answer the charge, or it was inconvenient for the convocation to continue its sittings. An adjournment, at all events, took place to the 12th day of July.

At that date, the prisoner was again brought up, when he was called upon to answer the charge before preferred ; and it was demanded, how, under the circumstances, he could presume to preach without the bishop's licence ? Chapel's spirit was broken by the imprisonment he had endured, or he was intimidated by the fearful scenes acted elsewhere, and considered it prudent to give way to

power, to confess error and to solicit pardon. Some scruple was made about granting it, but, in the end, milder counsels prevailed, and he was required to abjure all the opinions he had formerly held as heretical and schismatical, and to swear never to hold the same again. All these conditions being complied with, Chapel was absolved by the archbishop, but with one or two exceptions. Of these, the first declared, that he should not take upon himself to say mass again, till he received a dispensation from the Pope. It was further imposed upon him, as a penance, that he should stand at Paul's, and there publish the following paper:—

“Imprimis, I confess that bishops, priestes, and other ecclesiastical persones, having no other profession to the contrary, may lawfully have, receyve, and reteyne landes and possessions temporall, to dispense and dispose the same, and the rentes thereof, to the behoof of themselves or of theyr church where they dwell, according as seemeth good to them.

“2 Item. I confesse that it were very unlawful, yea, unjust, that temporall men, upon any occasion, whatsoever it be, should take away temporall landes and possessions from the church, either universal or particular, to whom they are given; the consideration of the abuse of mortall prelates, priests, or

other ministers in the church conversant (which are mixed together, good with bad), abusing the same to ye contrary, notwithstanding.

“3 Item. I confesse that peregrinations to the reliques of holy saintes, and to holy places, are not prohibited, nor to be contemned of any Catholike, but are avaylable to remission of sinnes, and approved of by holy fathers, and worthy to be commended.

“4 Item. I confesse that to worship the images of Christ, or of any other saintes, beyng set up in the church, or in any other place, is not forbidden; neither is any cause inductive of idolatry, beyng so used as the holy fathers do will them to be worshipped: but rather, such images do profit much to the health of Christians, because they do put us in remembrance of the merites of those saintes whom they represent, and the sight of them doth moove and stirre up the people to prayers and devotion.

“5 Item. I confesse that auricular confession used in the church is necessarye for a sinner to the salvation of hys soul, and necessary to be done of such a priest as is ordeyned by the church, to heare the confession of the sinner, and to enjoyne him penance for the same; without which confession (if it may be had) there is no remission of sinnes to him that is in sinne mortall.

“ 6 Item. I confesse and fermely do hold, that, although the priest be in mortall sinne, yet may he make the bodye of Christ, and minister other sacramentes and sacramentals, which, nevertheless, are profitable to all the faythfull whosever receiveth them in fayth and in devotion of the church.

“ 7 Item. I confesse that bishops, in their own dioces, may forbid, decree, and ordayne, upon reasonable causes, yt priestes should not preach, without their speciall license, the word of God, and that those that do agaynst the same should suffer the ecclesiastical censures.

“ 8 Item. I confesse that private religions, as well of monks, canons, and others, as also of the begging friers, beyng allowed by the Church of Rome, are profitable to the universal church, and in no means contrary to God’s law; but, rather, founded and authorised thereon.

“ 9 Item. I promise and sweare, upon these holy Evangelists, which I hold here in my handes, that I will henceforth never hold, affirm, nor by any means teach anything contrary unto the premises, either openly or privately.”

The promulgation of this confession, obtained by intimidating his chaplain, though a sweet *morceau* of vengeance for the enemies of Lord Cobham, was, however, far from satisfying their highly excited appetite. He had made war on their

hypocrisy and on their enjoyments too rudely ever to be forgiven; and, besides, a feeling existed that, while two distinguished men who shared his principles had been publicly burned at Constance, England, the country in which those hated opinions for which they suffered had originated, had not yet redeemed its fame for piety by sending one man above "the common sort" to the stake.

7. But, in the absence of the nobler game, they were content to pursue, in the spirit of "The Constitution" of Chichely, the smaller deer with industrious unsparing zeal. It was not enough for the honour of the sacred Catholic faith that a recantation had been extorted from a minister formerly chaplain to Cobham,—his household were next to be attacked. Edmund Frith, his butler, fell into their hands, and was threatened with great severity. The poor man, who, perhaps, had but a very imperfect knowledge of what his master's religious opinions were, was soon vanquished, and made his recantation in due form. That he subscribed to a certain prepared declaration for their purpose, was, in his case, all-sufficient: whether he was sincere in making it was a question on which they did not think it necessary to enter.

They did not confine their hostilities to those who were known to be immediately under the eye of Lord Cobham. Parties who were only sus-

pected of favouring his views,—and this was very generally the case of the humbler classes who lived in his neighbourhood,—were called to an account for their opinions. His wealth and generosity, as well as his fame for courage, had rendered him popular; and, in consequence, searching inquisitions were made in Tenterden, Romney, Woodchurch, and other places in Kent, and many unfortunate persons, alarmed at the proceedings instituted, fled from their houses, and wandered about the country in great distress, but in the hope of avoiding, by such expedients, more intolerable hardships.

8. The vast reward offered to those who should bring in Lord Cobham, dead or alive, which was from time to time recalled to the memory of the nation by new announcements, presented, to avaricious minds, a great and almost overpowering temptation. Such an accession of wealth few could contemplate with indifference, while others looked to the countenance they would receive from the highest authorities of the church, for giving to its righteous vengeance a condemned heretic.

It had been absurdly reported, even when the king was in England, that Cobham had thought of preferring a claim to the crown. While Henry was in France, his brother, the Duke of Bedford, who acted as regent, was frequently disturbed by sinister rumours of what Cobham was actually doing, or

intended to do. At one period, a new rising in London was spoken of, and he was believed to be on the spot, ready to lead the insurgents; at another, it was understood that his influence had prevailed upon the King of Scotland to resolve upon invading England. No danger could threaten the state from any quarter, but the malice of his enemies, or the imprudence of his friends, was on the alert to magnify his importance, by causing it to be regarded as proceeding from the labours and influence of Lord Cobham.

This, as already stated, had for several years been the course pursued by the enemies of the Lollards. "Many," says a writer of the seventeenth century, "had their eyes opened to see with indignation how deplorably the purity of the Catholic religion had been corrupted by the pride, avarice, and ambition of priests; and, by freely protesting against these corruptions, they had made the clergy their implacable enemies, who therefore endeavoured their ruin by all ways of violence, torture, fire, and death, and were very industrious to make them odious to the people. If a conspiracy was formed against the state, the Lollards were presently accused as the chief contrivers. Thus, when that execrable plot of the Earl of Cambridg was upon the point of being executed, and infamous libels were found posted on the doors of the churches in London, the

Lollards are arraigned by Walsingham as the authors of 'em. And now, the same historian, on occasion of the Scots invading England, takes the opportunity to blacken these poor people as guilty of inviting their ancient enemies to bring fire and sword into the bowels of their country; but let the reader judge whether there be not reason to suspect that he, who was a Benedictine monk of St. Alban's, might be influenced to partiality in his relation of things of this nation; for King Henry gives a different account of the matter; and, by his letter to the Duke of Exeter, we understand that it was the solicitation of the French which brought the Scots into England. The king had exact information of the design before put in execution, and received intelligence, from a person of quality and great credit, that it was concerted between the Duke of Orleans, prisoner in England, and the Duke of Albany. The king, therefore, ordered the Duke of Exeter to communicate this business to the Duke of Bedford, and the Chancellor, and to the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, that all preparations might be made for defence of the nation. He also commanded that the Duke of Orleans should no more have the liberty of going at large, but be kept close prisoner in Pomfret Castle."*

* History of the Reign of King Henry the Fifth.

9. Under these circumstances, piety, patriotism, or cupidity, moved the Lord Powis to aspire to the glory of arresting the fugitive. Residing in Wales, he had gained information that the noble object of priestly vengeance had sought concealment in his neighbourhood, and he determined, if possible, to secure him, and thus gain fame, as well as a considerable acquisition of fortune. The friends of the bishops corresponded with him from time to time, and are described as "feeding him with lordly gifts and promises, to accomplish their desire," which, in the end, he did. Having gained a knowledge of the unfortunate Lollard's hiding-place, he proceeded, accompanied by a number of armed men, determined to take him, dead or alive. The appearance of a force which he had no prospect of opposing with success, did not awe Cobham into submission. He had always borne the character of a brave man, and the desperate situation in which he stood made him resolute to sell life as dearly as possible. A cruel death, in the midst of exulting enemies, was all he could expect from a surrender; and feeling this, and preferring to die like a soldier in conflict, rather than as a malefactor at a place of execution, he was prepared to struggle to the last. But this consolation was denied to the veteran. In a fierce encounter, he had the misfortune to be grievously wounded. The accounts which have

reached us are confused and somewhat at variance. "It cost," says Fuller, "some blows and blood to apprehend him, till a woman, at last, with a stool, broke the Lord Cobham's legs, whereby he became lame." What female was likely to be there, and to act a part so unfeminine, savage, and determined, we are at a loss to guess. It is not to be supposed that the force despatched against him by Lord Powis would have included a female; and it is most improbable that any woman in the neighbourhood, or elsewhere, volunteered to take a share, and such a share, in the scene. To say nothing of the danger inseparable from mingling in a fight like that which preceded Lord Cobham's capture, the good name which he enjoyed was such that a tumultuary rising against him could hardly have taken place, and there was nothing in his life to make him the object of woman's vengeance.

Sir Edward Charlton is the name mentioned by some writers, as that of the individual who made Cobham prisoner. It is stated in a writ published by Hearne, but no reason can be assigned why this should be relied upon rather than the rolls of parliament. If Sir Edward Charlton were an actor in the tragedy, he was certainly acting under the directions of Earl Powis. That Cobham was seized by the peer's own hand, was never asserted; but it has not been doubted that to him belonged the merit, such

as it might be, of making the heretic prisoner. The struggle was desperate, and Cobham became unhappily disabled. A wound in the leg rendered it impossible for him to defend himself, and in that crippled state he was secured by the assailants.

10. This was early in December, 1417. A parliament had been called to sit on the 16th of November, which had met and been warmly congratulated on the successful progress of the king's arms in France. The joy inspired by victory did not make the enemies of Lord Cobham less thirsty for his blood than they had previously shown themselves. The moment it was known that he was wounded and a prisoner, his noble captor received instructions to send him, sick as he was from the injuries he had received, to London without delay. A horse-litter was procured for him, in which he proceeded, by what would now be called slow journeys, though they were as expeditious as could be made in those days, with the means of travelling then at command, through roads nearly impassable at that season of the year. His health rallied, notwithstanding the hardships he had endured, and the dismal prospect before him; and on the 18th of December the captive reformer was brought before the House of Peers. The Duke of Bedford and many lords of parliament, and members of the Lower House, were present; and, the prisoner being

placed at the bar and identified, the sentence pronounced on the charges preferred against him, in the year 1413, was read, and he was asked if he had anything to say why judgment should not pass against him.

11. Lord Cobham called the attention of their lordships to the opinions which he had formerly avowed, and to the object which he had uniformly had in view, and which was simply a reform of crying abuses. He denied that he had been guilty of the offences imputed, and reminded them, as all men were by nature sinners and dependent on God's mercy, that it was for them, sitting robed in authority as his judges, to prefer mercy to judgment. Vengeance belonged to the Lord of Hosts alone, and his true and faithful servants ought not to interfere with his prerogative, to effect, in cold blood, the destruction of their fellow-creatures.

12. Such language was pronounced to be wholly irrelevant. The chief justice appealed to the Duke of Bedford, as regent, to interfere, and to order the prisoner to cease wasting thus the time of the nobles of England, and to command that he should answer directly, if he had aught to say to the particular charges brought against him.

He again spoke, but resumed his former argument, denying that any one had proved, from the scripture, that he had countenanced error. He

appealed to the Searcher of all hearts for the purity of his motives, and declared, that, assured of a righteous judgment before the last dread tribunal, he stood little in awe of any sentence which their lordships, who were men like himself, might award.

This conduct was reprov'd as highly indecorous, and the chief justice again interrupted him to demand if he had any objection to make to the legality of the proceedings? Lord Cobham replied that he had had no impartial judge. Falsehoods reported of him were allowed to have the force of truth, and his enemies were encouraged in all their doings.

13. His fate was soon decided. One so impenitent was not to be spared. His former escape, the outbreak which immediately followed, and the subsequent discontents, while the king was in France, were all brought against him. The truth was hideously exaggerated, and injurious falsehood was invented. Though Wickliffe's opinions had made great progress, and though many had been taught by Lord Cobham to deride the vaunted sanctity of the church, and to condemn its luxury, avarice, and tyranny, this was not the source of the discontent which generally prevailed. Much of the disaffection at different periods manifested, grew on the heavy burthens thrown on the nation by the war.

The people of England, at that date, as at subsequent periods of history, though really fond of glory, great as their triumphs were, found it so costly, that it was no easy matter to pay its price. Of course, this was not borne in mind, and every symptom of disaffection was made an aggravation of the prisoner's guilt by the parliament. They condemned Cobham to death,—to be hanged as a traitor and burned as a heretic; and the warrant for his execution was instantly signed.

Nothing dismayed, the prisoner calmly surveyed the regent, the bishops, and the rest of his judges, while they were engaged in this harsh proceeding. He expressed himself perfectly resigned to quit a world in which he had suffered so much; and solemnly thanked the Almighty, for having, in his infinite wisdom, ordained that he should lay down his life in so good a cause.

The sentence pronounced set forth, that, having before been outlawed for treason, in the Court of King's Bench, and excommunicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury for heresy, he was, upon that record and process, now to suffer. It was therefore directed that he should be taken, first, to the Tower of London, and thence dragged, on a hurdle, to the new gallows beyond Temple-bar, in St. Giles's Fields. The gallows then, and for more than three centuries afterwards, was not periodically erected

when criminals were to die, but permanently fixed at the place of execution, which, at that date, was near the spot where Oxford-street now leads from Tottenham-court-road.

14. One other proceeding appears to have immediately followed the condemnation of Lord Cobham. A vote of thanks was moved to the Lord Powis, for the signal service he had rendered to the state, in bringing to justice the traitor and heretic, as he was called, who, for four years, had successfully eluded all the efforts that were made to apprehend him. The motion was unanimously agreed to. Lord Cobham was condemned to death by a body who deemed themselves most upright and august, and to a most painful, and, so far as they could make it, ignominious death, not for any act of atrocity which men, in what is called an uncivilised state, would have judged it necessary to punish with such severity, but because he differed from them on certain points of faith, which they judged essential to salvation, and which, if they were so, involved consequences sufficiently awful to him, it might be presumed, to satisfy enmity the most rancorous. Such irrational severity must be viewed with horror; but it may justly be regarded as the offspring of weakness, not less than of hatred. Among the assembly who concurred in dooming the gallant soldier to a fate more dreadful than

that reserved for ordinary culprits, were some who desired but to conciliate the favouring regard of a God who loves "mercy rather than sacrifice." Wherever religion has seemed to be most the object of human care, pious men—men whose general carriage proved them sincerely anxious to act a virtuous part—have been found ready to sanction the awful slaughter of their fellow-men, on the plea of avenging the wrong offered to their Creator, as if his resistless thunderbolt and blasting lightning required the puny co-operation of a mortal hand to vindicate his name.

15. The punishment his enemies doomed Lord Cobham to undergo was somewhat out of the common way. He was ordered to be suspended horizontally in chains, and in that situation to be burned to death. All things considered, this mode of execution might not be more painful than the usual course of chaining the sufferer to a stake, while he stood on the ground, or was only elevated by fagots placed beneath his feet; but it was a dismal novelty, or, at least, a frightful variety, which gratified the gloomy minds of those who willed it; and probably they expected that such a deviation from the ordinary course, not less than the name and high rank of the victim, would strike terror into the nation generally, and arrest for ever the progress of reforming innovation.

The result did not justify their fond anticipations. It was in vain they multiplied the startling circumstances which were to render memorable Lord Cobham's exit from life. The prisoner viewed them but as the brief thorny path to a life of never-ending felicity, and derived such nourishing support from this assurance, that he was able to smile at all the horrors of his situation, and pass to the last fearful ordeal without any apparent depression.

From the fatal apparatus which frowned on the spot we have described, three chains depended, on the appointed day when Cobham was to suffer, which were destined to hold his form over the fire to be kindled on the ground beneath the gallows, in order to reduce all that was mortal of the Christian champion to ashes. To witness an exit so remarkable, of one so honoured, a vast crowd repaired to St. Giles's in the Fields. There were some present who rejoiced in the melancholy spectacle, but his hard fate was generally deplored by those who had long known him as the friend to religious liberty, the enemy of Romish tyranny, and the constant advocate for that reform which was as naturally as ardently desired.

16. No records of the time give the details of the closing scene with that minute exactness and calm impartiality which are looked for in a modern newspaper. The foes of the victim speak dispa-

ragingly of Cobham in his last moments, and represent him to have been as wild and visionary as the poor maniac, who, a few years back, caused several lives to be lost, his own among them, in the neighbourhood of Canterbury. It is told of him that he entreated Sir Thomas Erpingham, who stood near the apparatus of death, to bear witness that he prophesied he would rise from the dead on the third day after his execution; and he added a request, that, when this should take place, he, Sir Thomas, would intercede with the king, that all persecution of the Lollards might cease.

It is utterly incredible that Cobham should have preferred such a request. All his previous conduct shows that, zealous as he was in the cause of religion, insane enthusiasm, which only could have carried him to this length, was no part of his character. Surprise may be felt that a story so extravagant should have been invented; but the ridiculous fabrications which, even in these enlightened times, frequently obtain credence, forbid great surprise that such an unfeeling calumny should have obtained circulation.

Further to dwell on such an invention, would be folly. Though Walsingham affects to hold it entitled to the fullest credit, and exclaims, "*Tanta fuit dementia!*" the statement is at variance with all probability. Lord Cobham was zealous and

sincere, but he was no fanatic; and though the respectable name of Sir Thomas Erpingham is given as authority for the report, some writers say it was uttered not to him, but to one of his tormentors, named Crepingham, or, according to others, Copingham. Taking the first as the best authority, it is proper to remark, this is not the only instance in which the warrior who gave the signal for commencing the fight at Agincourt has been mixed up with a narrative too absurd for belief. In "The Antiquarian Repertory" we find a long story of his causing a dead monk, who had paid his court to Lady Erpingham, to be tied on a horse, and sent forth under such circumstances that the corpse chased a living brother, and eventually caused him to confess a murder which he had never committed. The author of that narrative would have found no difficulty in accusing the great Captain of Agincourt of holding the language respecting Lord Cobham, above ascribed to him, to give his reader momentary surprise.

17. From accounts better to be depended upon, or at least more probable, we learn that Cobham's last moments were such as became a soldier and a man. The rational courage of his honourable life was maintained up to the moment of his death. On the day (Christmas-day) which was to make him immortal, he was brought out of the city with

his hands tied behind him. He was placed on a hurdle, to be drawn to the place of execution; and an expression of holy joy, at the prospect of soon reaching a happier state of existence, we are told, sat on his countenance. On being removed from the hurdle, he approached the apparatus of death, and, falling on his knees, uttered a prayer in which he implored forgiveness for his enemies. He then calmly looked round on the assembled multitude, and briefly but firmly exhorted them not to be misled, but to govern themselves by the instructions which God had provided for them in the sacred scriptures. He cautioned them against giving their confidence to false teachers, and to men whose lives and conversation were anything but in accordance with Christ and his religion. He was advised to confess himself to a priest, but he unhesitatingly replied, that, "if the apostles Peter and Paul were there, he would not do so even to them, as one infinitely superior, God himself, was present, and to him he had, in all humility, confessed his sins. From his mercy he confidently hoped for pardon, and to none beside would he make confession."

The awful spectacle of the contrivances for torturing him did not at all abate his courage. He was suspended to the cross-beam of the gallows by a chain passed round his middle. An old picture

of the execution represents two other chains sustaining his head and feet, so as to keep his body nearly in an horizontal position. A fire was made, and he died commending his soul to its Eternal Author, while the priests are represented to have acted the foolish and ferocious part of calling on the pitying spectators not to pray for a man whom they scrupled not to declare was passing to the infernal regions, for dying in obstinate rebellion to the holy Catholic church, the cardinals, and the Pope. The persecuting spirit, which had desired to aggravate the horrors of burning to death, was in some measure disappointed. When the fire was applied, the smoke ascended in such a volume that it was believed Cobham had expired from suffocation, or was rendered insensible, before the flames reached his body. He was eventually reduced to ashes; and the bigots, his destroyers, hoped, by this enormity, their power was rendered secure. How far the result answered to their expectations need not be told. They had little knowledge of human nature who could persuade themselves that aspirings like those of Lord Cobham and his friends, sustained by deep conviction and immortal hope, could thus be extinguished by man's hostility.

It is more than probable that Henry, like Sigismund, saw cause to repent that such severity had been used. From more than one circumstance we

know that it was repugnant to his feelings. But the throbs of a royal conscience are in most cases soon set at rest. Courtly prelates are at hand; and when the remorse-stricken monarch is alarmed, and trembles to go through the ordeal in which he will be on a level with the meanest of his subjects, it is then that all the skill of his ghostly confessor is put forth, to give the sufferer the comforting assurance that state necessity will shelter him, and that deeds which would be criminal in a man, are required by duty from a king. This has been witnessed in modern times; and the science of flattery, where royalty was concerned, in the hands of the minions of the Pope, had reached a degree of perfection which their ablest successors could not surpass.

CHAPTER XXV.

EMINENT WRITERS IN THE TIME OF HENRY THE FIFTH.

1. England famed for literature, arts, and sciences.--2. Stephen Partington.--3. Purvey.--4. Various authors.

1. IN tracing the course of Lord Cobham, it has been attempted to describe, with perfect impartiality, the doings of his contemporaries with whom he immediately came in contact. Some further notice ought to be supplied of those who thus acted a conspicuous part in connexion with literature and the church.

Greatly as that period was eclipsed by the lights which shone on the world in the next century, the reign of Henry the Fifth was deemed by his contemporaries not less eminently distinguished by the triumphs of the arts and sciences and letters, than it was by the renown which he gained from his extraordinary success in arms.

2. Among the eminent men of the times, was Stephen Partington, a Carmelite friar. He had

taken his degrees as doctor of divinity at Oxford, and afterwards was created general of his order throughout England. He was the twenty-third who had attained to that dignity, which he held for fifteen years, having, it is said, during that period, no fewer than fifteen hundred friars under him. The fame of his erudition was great, and, as a preacher, he was followed by immense crowds, especially in London. He was not only admired by the common people, but by the nobility, and by the king himself, who, greatly pleased with his eloquence, invited him to court, conferred many favours upon him, and, in 1414, advanced him to the bishopric of St. David's, when that see fell vacant after the advancement of Chichely. He was present at the Council of Constance, and was, by the Pope's authority, translated to the see of Gloucester. Partington wrote many books: the titles of fifteen of them are preserved. The subjects he treated were various; but his writings were, for the most part, connected with religion. Among them we find the following:—

“*Repertorium Argumentorium*,” “*Contra Wrelevistas*,” “*In Æsopi Fabulas*,” “*Sermones 72 de Tempore*,” “*Contra Statutum quoddam*.” He died in London, in the year 1417.

Robert Mascall, who was also a Carmelite, and sent with Partington to Constance, after studying

Aristotle's Philosophy, applied himself to divinity. He was employed in several embassies by King Henry the Fourth, to whom he became father confessor. He was likewise in favour with Henry the Fifth. His death took place at Ludlow, December 21st, 1417. Among the works which he left behind, we find—"Sermones coram Rege," and "Sermones Vulgare."

3. Purvey has been mentioned in the foregoing pages. He appears to have been a voluminous writer. A catalogue of nineteen books from his learned pen is extant. One of them, the "Commentarius in Apocalypsum," it is worthy of remark, was produced while he was in prison. It was drawn from the public lectures of Wickliffe, and had the singular fortune to be published by Martin Luther, in 1528, at Wittemberg. The great champion of reform, in this instance, has been thought to have "decked himself in borrowed plumes," as he did not consider it necessary to give the author's name with the book. Purvey was put in prison by Chichely some time after the death of Lord Cobham, and Bale thinks it probable that he died a prisoner.

4. We may add, the following occur among the remarkable names of the age:—

"John Leland, Sen., enjoyed great fame as a grammarian, and was thought an admirable writer

both in prose and verse. At Oxford he taught with so much applause, that this verse was commonly repeated in his praise :—

‘*Ut Rosa Flos Florum, sic Leland Grammaticorum.*’

“Thomas Rudburn, or Rodburn, was not only a great divine, but a famous mathematician. He was one of the proctors of the University of Oxford, A.D. 1402, and afterward chancellor, 1420. He was president of Merton College, afterwards Archdeacon of Sudbury, and, at last, Bishop of St. David’s. But before he was advanced to this dignity, he had been appointed by Henry the Fourth to judge and censure some of the writings of Wickliffe. A vigorous wit shines, says Bale, in his Epistles to Walden. After having acquired a stock of various learning, he applied himself to history, and composed his ‘Chronicle.’ He built the tower over the gate of Merton College. King Henry the Sixth would have promoted him, in 1434, to the bishopric of Ely, but could not.

“Alain de Lynn was born in that town, in Norfolk, from which he had his name, and was there a Carmelite friar, and at last prior of the convent. He studied philosophy and divinity in Cambridge, and commenced doctor in the latter. He turned the histories of the Bible into allegories, as was usual by those of his order. With vast labour he compiled the indexes of above fifty authors. He

died at Lynn, and was there buried in the convent of the Carmelites.

“ Thomas Otterburn, a Franciscan friar, after he had made a good progress in philosophy and divinity, applied himself to history. His performances in it were commendable for diligence, due order, and method.

“ John Seguarde flourished in 1414, and was the famed poet and orator of his time; a man of great reading, excellent judgment, and the glory of his country for variety of learning. As he was a person of unblamable life, so he freely wrote against the profanation of the Christian religion by the monks and priests, and against the abuse of poetry. He taught polite learning in Norfolk, and particularly in Norwich. He wrote several books, both in verse and prose, which he dedicated to Richard Courteney, bishop of that city:—1. ‘Metristenchi-ridion;’ 2. ‘Cathemetron;’ 3. ‘Decretum Apollinis;’ 4. ‘De Miseria Hominis;’ 5. ‘Carmina diversi Generis;’ 6. ‘Epistolæ ad Diversos.’—All these Bale says he had seen in Merton College, at Oxford, and in the library of King Edward at London.

“ John Walter had his first education in the college which William Perott, *alias* Wickham, founded at Winchester. From thence he removed to Oxford, where he successfully pursued his stu-

dies, and made a great improvement, especially in natural philosophy and the mathematics. After some time he returned to Winchester College, where he lived to an old age.

“ Robert Rose was a Carmelite friar of that convent at Norwich, which was commonly called the White Friars. He acquired a great reputation at Oxford, as a subtle philosopher and profound divine. After he had taken his degree of doctor of divinity, his convent recalled him, and made him their prior. Though he wrote much, yet, so great was his moderation, that, among the many who continually pursued the Wickliffists with invectives, he abstained from giving them the least reproachful word. He lived to an old age; died December 16th, 1420; and was buried in his convent.

“ John Luck, of Merton College, in Oxford, was a famous divine and Wickliffist, says Wood; but unless there were two of that name, Bale gives a very different account of him,—that he was one of the censors of Wickliffe’s doctrine, under Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1412; that in the following year he presented to the Convocation at London two hundred and sixty-six articles drawn out of Wickliffe’s works. There was a great familiarity between him and Thomas Walden. His writings were these:—1. ‘ De Ambiguis Scripturarum Locis;’ 2. ‘ Dissertationes

Veritatum ;' 3. 'Ad Thomam Waldenum Dialogi ; 4. 'Quæstionum Argumenta.'

“Richard Caistre was born in Norfolk, near Norwich, and was vicar of St. Stephen's in that city. He secretly favoured the doctrines of Wickliffe, and freely reprovèd, in his sermons, the corrupt manners of the priests, which was all he could do to reform them. He had a reputation for learning, but for piety especially ; insomuch that he was commonly called Caistre the Good. He died at Norwich, 1420. This author, unlike most of those who have been mentioned, wrote in English. The following are the titles of his works :—1. 'Of the Ten Commandments ;' 2. 'Of the Eight Beatitudes ;' 3. 'Of the Duties between Master and Servant ;' 4. 'Of the Duties between Son and Father ; 5. 'Of the Duties between Husband and Wife ;' 6. 'Of Brotherly Love ;' 7. 'Some Homilies out of St. Bernard.' ”

Without undertaking to enumerate all who gained eminence in letters at this period, as a matter of literary history the following ought to be mentioned :—

“Bertram Fizalen, or Allenson, of a noble family in Lincolnshire, was born at Lincoln, and took on him the vow and habit of a Carmelite friar. When he was fit for the learning of an university, he went to Oxford, and studied Aristotle's Philo-

sophy, and the school divinity. His great patron was William Quaplod, a Carmelite, and Bishop of Kildare in Ireland. He died at Lincoln, May 17th, 1424.

“ William Wellys, or (as Holinshed names him) Walleis, was an Augustin monk, or black friar, in a convent at Lynn, and was at last advanced to be the general of that order throughout England. He died at Lynn, A.D. 1421.

“ Richard Snetisham went young to Oxford, where he made so considerable a progress in learning, that, having passed through the first course of his studies, he acquired a high esteem in that university; insomuch that he was advanced to be their chancellor, A.D. 1412, which honour they thought was but the just reward of his eminent knowledge and prudence. As an acute disputant, he was equal to any of that age, with which was joined a force of eloquence as great as could be expected in those times, and he constantly interpreted the holy scriptures in the public schools. He was one of the twelve whom the Archbishop of Canterbury appointed censors of Wickliffe's doctrine. He flourished in 1420, and wrote the following books: 1. ‘Lectura Theologiæ;’ 2. ‘Ad quædam Dubia;’ 3. ‘Abbreviationes Couutoni;’ 4. ‘Contra quosdam Articulos Wiclevi.’

“ William Batecumbe, or Badecon, was eminent

in natural philosophy and the mathematics at Oxford, and acquired a great fame by his writings in the latter.

“ John Langdene, a Benedictine monk of Christ Church, in Canterbury, was born in Kent, and took the degree of doctor at Oxford. He was skilled in all sorts of learning, but made history the chief design and business of his life. Thomas Rudburn, junior, makes use of his authority in the ‘ Chronicle of England ’ which he wrote. He was one of the twelve censors who condemned Wickliffe’s doctrine, and for his service herein was afterward, A.D. 1422, made Bishop of Rochester by the provision of the Pope. As that see had been originally erected by the Archbishop of Canterbury, so Langdene swore homage to Henry Chichely, as holding his diocese of him. He expended a great sum of money in repairing Rochester-bridge, and died at the Council of Basil, A.D. 1434.

“ John Sherburn, a monk, wrote a Chronicle of England, from the first coming in of the Trojans to the reign of Henry the Sixth. It is called ‘ Chronica Britannorum, MS. inter Codd. D. Com. Clarendon.’

“ John Henfield, a monk of Battel Abbey, drew an abstract of the chronicles of this nation down to the same time.

“ John Beston was prior of a convent of the Carmelites at Lynn. He was not only famous for natural philosophy and divinity in the university of Cambridge, but also in that of Paris. He was an acute disputant, and an eloquent preacher in English, being one of the best orators of those times. He was sent to the council called by Pope Martin the Fifth, to meet at Siena, A.D. 1424. He died at Lynn, A.D. 1428.

“ William Taylor, Master of Arts at Oxford. was a priest of an unblamable life. Being converted by Wickliffe’s sermons, he became not only a favourer, but a zealous asserter of his doctrines. He boldly protested against the superstitions and idolatries of those times. He proved, from the scriptures, that prayers ought not to be addressed to departed saints, but to God alone; and that the worshipping of images was abominable to God. He was indeed prevailed upon to recant nine articles tendered to him; but, recovering from this weakness, he avowed the truth more boldly, and with great constancy suffered martyrdom by fire in Smithfield, March 2nd, A.D. 1422.

“ Richard Grasdale, of Oxford, was eminent in the learning of that age—Aristotle’s Philosophy, and the scholastic divinity; but he gained his greatest fame by writing history. These are his works:—

1. ‘ De Ætatibus Mundi ad A.D. 1390;’ 2. ‘ De

Regnis et Civitatibus;’ 3. ‘De Dilatatione Fidei;’ 4. ‘De Præliis Famosis;’ 5. ‘Carmina Diversa.’ He was one of the twelve censors and judges of Wickliffe’s books and doctrines. He flourished A.D. 1420, and lived to an old age.”

This list could easily be extended, if it were necessary, to show that learning was not absent from the land, when those who, though they possessed it, may yet be counted among “its barbarous foes,” strove, with fatal success, against the generous men who made war on corruption and absurdity. Divines of a later period have held, that each age has its appointed service, and that few ages have formed just views of their own intellectual, civil, and social interests. “Events,” it has been well observed, “have a relation to God, as well as to man. In them the divine and the human are mysteriously blended. All the evil in them is from man,—all the good in them is from God. All events are filled with the Divine presence. They are vivid reflections of the everlasting principles on which God governs the world.”

They deserve consideration from all who wish to sustain and elevate the Christian name. If Moses called on the wanderers in the desert to remember the scenes of which they were the appointed witnesses, and to speak of them to their children, that they might report them to their posterity, with almost

equal reason might those who beheld the proceedings connected with "The Life and Times of the Good Lord Cobham," have desired that they should be held in perpetual remembrance.

Not to individual cruelty, so much as perverted principle, ought the evils to be imputed which humanity must deplore. Hateful pride, stung by daring opposition, no doubt often mingled in the mournful strife, threw its weight into the scale, and crushed the struggling champion of religious liberty. But there were those who held that, as all law and order were based on religion, all true religion must come from Rome, and, from these premises, easily persuaded themselves that civil society could not continue to exist if the authority of the church were shaken by attempts to reform it. They shared the sentiments of the Abbé de la Mennais in our own time. He tells—"There are two swords,—the spiritual sword, which cuts down error, and the exercise of which belongs to the Pope alone; and the material sword, which it is the duty of the prince to use. But as the force which is not directed by justice is the greatest of evils, and can only cause disorder and ruin, the material sword is necessarily called into action, as the body is made to act subject to reason." The Abbé further says—"There is, above the temporal order of things, a power which unceasingly watches

to maintain the observance of the law of justice and truth; and the prince who violates it fundamentally—the prince who attempts to substitute a power purely human for the power which he holds of God, under certain imprescriptible conditions—the prince who, refusing to be the minister, the vicar of Christ, revolts against the authority whence his own is derived, loses all title to obedience, and the oppressed people may, and ought, according to the laws of spiritual society, use force to defend their true sovereign, and to reconstitute themselves after a Christian fashion.”

This is neither more nor less than to say, “the king who will not vigorously use the material sword, when the authority of the Pope is threatened by innovation, may lawfully be dethroned.” Such arguments were pressed on the monarchs of the fifteenth century; they decided Sigismund to give John Huss to the flames, and animated Henry the Fifth and his regent to pursue Lord Cobham to death.

A later age offers mournful examples of the manner in which such principles are capable of being carried out; and horrors before which the persecutions recounted in these pages shrink into insignificance, were exhibited to the astonished world by those who professed to fight the battles of the true faith.

Whether such scenes are again to be witnessed,—

whether that Power which permitted the triumph of the great founder of Christianity, and his immediate disciples, to remain incomplete, has willed that weakness shall again sink beneath persecution,—it might be hazardous to declare; but this, at least, we may safely conclude, that the spirit which moved Lord Cobham to resist priestly tyranny can never be put down. Power may enlist a host of minions to assail and crush the bold individual who ventures to assail its stronghold; the champion may fall, but the cause cannot be lost. The martyr may die, but cannot be subdued. As represented in the singular vision of John Huss, new images replace the one which has been obliterated, which can never be effaced. The mantle of the prophet finds a fitting wearer; his ashes become seed, from which a new harvest of truth is gained. The course of thought, though for a time interrupted, cannot be finally arrested. Will not a truth so obvious at length be understood, felt, and recognised by the whole family of mankind,—that those who feel constrained to differ in faith may at least tolerate each other and unite in charity?

A P P E N D I X

THE following extracts, &c., will throw light on some passages in the foregoing pages.

NECROMANCERS AND WITCHES.

The strange idea that miraculous powers were given to mortals by the devil has survived even to the present time. It was, however, almost universally respected for centuries after the period referred to in these volumes. Fuller, facetious as he was, seriously believed in such pacts being made between Satan and human beings. Their causes he thus describes :—

“ 1. Formerly there were witches. Otherwise God’s law had fought against a shadow, ‘Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live :’ yea, we read how King Saul, who had formerly scoured witches out of all Israel, afterwards drank a draught of that puddle himself.

“ 2. There are witches for the present, though

those night-birds fly not so frequently in flocks since the light of the Gospel. Some ancient arts and mysteries are said to be lost; but sure the devil will not wholly let down any of his gainful trades. There be many witches at this day in Lapland, who sell winds to mariners for money, (and must they not needs go whom the devil drives?) though we are not bound to believe the old story of Ericus King of Swedeland, who had a cap, and, as he turned it, the wind he wished for would blow on that side.

“ 3. It is very hard to prove a witch. Infernal contracts are made without witnesses. She that, in presence of others, will compact with the devil, deserves to be hanged for her folly as well as impiety.

“ 4. Many are unjustly accused for witches. Sometimes out of ignorance of natural, and misapplying of supernatural causes;—sometimes out of their neighbours’ mere malice; and the suspicion is increased if the party accused be notoriously ill-favoured; whereas, deformity alone is no more argument to make her a witch, than handsomeness had been evidence to prove her an harlot;—sometimes out of their own causeless confession; being brought before a magistrate, they acknowledge themselves to be witches, being themselves rather bewitched with fear, or deluded with fancy.

But the self-accusing of some is as little to be credited as the self-praising of others, if alone without other evidence.

“ 5. Witches are commonly of the feminine sex. Ever since Satan tempted our grandmother Eve, he knows that that sex is most liquorish to taste, and most careless to swallow his baits. *Nescio quid habet muliebrenomen semper cum sacris* : if they light well, they are inferior to few men in piety ; if ill, superior to all in superstition. They are commonly distinguished into white and black witches. White, I dare not say good, witches (for woe be to him that calleth evil good) heal those that are hurt, and help them to lost goods. But better it is to lap one’s pottage like a dog, than to eat it mannerly with a spoon of the devil’s giving. Black witches hurt and do mischief. But in deeds of darkness there is no difference of colours: the white and the black are both guilty alike in compounding with the devil. And now we come to see by what degrees people arrive at this height of profaneness.

“ At the first she is only ignorant, and very malicious. She hath usually a bad face, and a worse tongue, given to railing and cursing, as if constantly bred on Mount Ebal ; yet speaking perchance worse than she means, though meaning worse than she should. And as the harmless

wapping of a cursed cur may stir up a fierce mastiff to the worrying of sheep, so, on her cursing, the devil may take occasion, by God's permission, to do mischief, without her knowledge, and, perchance, against her will.

“ Some have been made witches by endeavouring to defend themselves against witchcraft; for, fearing some suspected witch should hurt them, they fence themselves with the devil's shield against the devil's sword, put on his *whole armour*, beginning to use spells and charms to safeguard themselves. The art is quickly learnt, to which nothing but credulity and practice is required: and they often fall, from defending themselves, to offending of others, especially the devil not being dainty of his company, where he finds welcome; and, being invited once, he haunts ever after.

“ She begins at first with doing tricks rather strange than hurtful; yea, some of them are pretty and pleasing. But it is dangerous to gather flowers that grow on the banks of the pit of hell, for fear of falling in; yea, they which play with the devil's rattles will be brought by degrees to wield his sword, and from making of sport they come to doing of mischief.

“ At last she indents downright with the devil. He is to find her some toys for a time, and to have her soul in exchange. At the first (to give the

devil his due) he observes the agreement, to keep up his credit, else none would trade with him; though at last he either deceives her with an equivocation, or at some other small hole this Serpant winds out himself, and breaks the covenants. And where shall she, poor wretch, sue the forfeited bond? In heaven she neither can nor dare appear; on earth she is hanged if the contract be proved; in hell her adversary is judge, and it is woful to appeal from the devil to the devil. But, for a while, let us behold her in her supposed felicity.

“ She takes her free progress from one place to another. Sometimes the devil doth locally transport her; but he will not be her constant hackney to carry such luggage about, but oftentimes, to save portage, deludes her brains in her sleep, so that they brag of long journeys, whose heads never travelled from their bolsters. These, with Drake, sailed about the world, but it is on an ocean of their own fancies, and in a ship of the same. They boast of brave banquets they have been at, but they would be very lean should they eat no other meat; others will persuade, if any list to believe, that, by a witch-bridle, they can make a fair of horses of an acre of besome-weed. O silly souls! O subtil Satan that deceived them!”

PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

Vol. i. p. 29.

The number of Jews reported to have been banished by King Edward the First, is said by Matthew of Westminster to have amounted to no fewer than sixteen thousand five hundred and eleven persons. That the severity with which they were treated has not been exaggerated in the notice taken of it here, the extract below, from the "*Anglia Judaica*," by D'Bloissiers Tovey, LL.D., published at Oxford in 1738, will prove.

In 1230 the King, Henry the Third, having occasion for money, demanded a supply from the Jews, which they declared it was not in their power to advance. Upon this we are told,—

"The king therefore, parting from them in a fury, commissioned his brother, Earl Richard, to raise what money he wanted upon the Jews. Which as he punctually endeavoured to execute, these unhappy people were driven to such despair as to resolve, one and all, to depart the country; and therefore deputed Elias, one of their senior rabbies, to acquaint the earl, that (as they plainly perceived their utter destruction would be inevitable if they stayed any longer in England) they humbly besought the king for leave to go away; assuring

him, that, were it in their power, his demands no sooner should be made than satisfied; but, that as matters were with them at present, they could not possibly supply him though they should sell their skins; for, by his connivance at the Causini, and some of his own private bankers, their trade had been so far ruined as not to yield them a subsistence. At the end of which speech (it being delivered with great concern and vehemence), the poor old man fainted, and was with some difficulty brought again to himself.

“Upon which the earl, prudently considering that their removal was no ways consistent with the king’s affairs at present (who had rather get little by them than nothing), pretended to be very much their friend; and answered, that the king his brother was their loving prince, and ready at all times to oblige them, but in this matter could not grant their request, because the King of France had lately published a severe edict against the Jews, and no other Christian country would receive them; by which means they would be exposed to such hardships and difficulties as would much afflict the king, who had always been tender of their welfare. In short, they raised what money they could, and the king, for this once, was contented to take it.

“Yet, notwithstanding such manifest desolation,

this loving prince called upon them again the very next year ; and when they presumed to remonstrate, and again begged leave to depart, they could obtain nothing further than the following royal declaration :—

“‘It is no marvel if I covet money ; it is an horrible thing to imagine the debts wherein I am held bound. By the head of God, they amount to the sum of two hundred thousand marks ; and if I should say three, I should not exceed the bounds of truth. I am deceived on every side. I am a maimed and abridged king ; yea, now but a halfed king. For, having made a certain estimate of the expenses of my rents, the sum of the annual rent of Edward my son amounts to above fifteen thousand marks. There is therefore a necessity for me to live of the money gotten from what place soever, and from whomsoever, and by what means soever.’ Therefore, as Mr. Prynne continues to express it, being made another Titus or Vespasian, he sold the Jews for some years to Earl Richard, his brother, that those whom the king had excoriated, he might eviscerate.”

The deed which contains this curious mortgage is well worth quoting, and runs thus :—

“Rex omnibus, &c. Noveritis nos mutuo accepisse à dilecto Fratrem, & fideli nostro R. Comite Cornubiæ, quinque millia Marcarum Sterlingorum

novorum, & integrorum; ad quorum solutionem, assignavimus, & tradidimus ei, omnes Judæos nostros Angliæ. Assignavimus etiam, & obligavimus, eosdem Judæos prædicto Comiti, ad solutionem trium millium Marcarum in quibus Nobis tenebantur, de Tallagio eidem Comiti faciendo, in hunc Modum; videlicet, that the Jews should pay to the earl, his executors or assigns, in Quind. Trin. anno 39, 1000*l.*; in Quinden. S. Mich. the same year, 1000*l.*, &c.; and that the Jews should forfeit 500*l.* for every default of payment. The king further grants the earl power to destrain them by their chattels and bodies; with other covenants, which may be seen at length in Rymer.”

On the walls of an old vault at Winchester was found an affecting evidence of their imprisonment in the succeeding reign, in an inscription which some captive Jew had scratched, in Hebrew, upon a soft stone—the translation of which is,—

“All the Jews of this nation were imprisoned in the year five thousand and forty-seven (1287 A.D.). I, Asher, wrote this.”—*Selden de Jur. Nat.*, l. ii. c. 6.

PROCESSION TO WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

The grand ceremonial performed by Henry the Third in honour of St. Edward is thus given by D’Israeli from an old author:—

“ Henry summoned all the great men of the kingdom, A.D. 1247, to come to London on the festival of St. Edward, to receive an account of a certain sacred benefit which Heaven had lately bestowed on England. The singular strain of this summons excited the most eager curiosity, and brought great multitudes to London at the time appointed. When they were all assembled in St. Paul’s Church, the king acquainted them that the great Master of the Knights Templars had sent him, by one of his knights, a phial of crystal, containing a *small portion of the precious blood of Christ*, which he had shed upon the *cross* for the salvation of the world, *attested to be genuine* by the seals of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, of several archbishops, bishops, and abbots. This, he informed them, he designed to carry, the next day, in solemn procession, to Westminster, attended by them and by all the clergy of London, in their proper habits, with their banners, crucifixes, and wax candles; and exhorted all who were present to prepare themselves for that sacred solemnity, by spending the night in watching, fasting, and devout exercises.

“ On the morrow, when the procession was put in order, the king approached the sacred phial with *reverence, fear, and trembling*; took it in both his hands, and, holding it up higher than his face,

proceeded under a canopy, two assistants supporting his arms. Such was the devotion of Henry on this occasion, that, though the road between St. Paul's and Westminster was very deep and miry, he kept his eyes constantly *fixed on the phial* or on heaven. When the procession approached Westminster, it was met by two monks of that abbey, who conducted it into the church, where the king deposited the venerable relic; 'which,' says the historian, 'made all England shine with glory, dedicating it to God and St. Edward.' "

BISHOPS AND THEIR INFLUENCE.

It was generally believed that the war with France was caused by the English bishops. On the subject of kings being so moved by those about them, Philip de Comines, who wrote about half a century afterwards, thus delivers himself:—

"I cannot forbear blaming and discommending illiterate princes, who generally are led by the nose by certain lawyers and priests, which they keep commonly about them; and, indeed, not without reason; for, as they are very serviceable to a prince, and an ornament to his court, when they are persons of honour and probity, so they are as dangerous if they prove otherwise, who have always some law or precedent in their mouths, which they wrest and pervert as they please; but a wise prince, and

one that has read history, will never be deluded ; nor will any courtier be so audacious as to tell a lie in his presence. Believe me, God never designed the office of a king to be executed by beasts, or such as glory and pride themselves in such answers as these—‘ I am no scholar ; I refer business wholly to my council, and commit all things to their management,’—and then devote themselves entirely to their pleasures, without further reason or expostulation : had they been better educated in their youth, they would have been wiser, and have earnestly desired that their person and their virtues might have been valued and esteemed by all good men.”

CHICHELY'S NARRATIVE.

The following account of the steps taken against Lord Cobham, it will be seen, is drawn up to prove the great mildness with which the unfortunate reformer was treated. It is to be remarked that the archbishop speaks of the paper produced by Cobham when under examination as being indented, and the wording of it is somewhat different from that given vol. i. p. 199 :—

“ *The Archbishop of Canterbury against the Lord Oldcastle, 1 Hen. V., A.D. 1413. [From the*

Records at Lambeth, and may be found in Rymer's 'Fœdera,' t. ix. p. 61.]

“ Thomas, by Divine permission Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and Legate of the Apostolic See, to our venerable brother Richard, by the grace of God Bishop of London, health and brotherly love in the Lord.—Whereas, in our late consultation, concerning the unity and reformation of the Church of England, in convocation of the prelates and clergy of our province of Canterbury, last held in our church of St. Paul’s, with the said prelates and clergy, among other things it was concluded by us, and the said prelates and clergy, next to impossible to repair the rending of our Lord’s seamless coat, unless first of all certain great men of the kingdom, the authors, abettors, protectors, defenders, and entertainers of those heretics who are called Lollards, were severely reprehended, and reclaimed from their errors, if other means failed, by the censure of the church, assisted by the secular arm. And, accordingly, upon the most diligent inquiry in the said convocation, by the proxies of the clergy, and others, there assembled in great numbers from each diocese of our said province, it was found by them, and made known and presented to us, that Sir John Oldcastle, Knight, was and is the principal re-

ceiver, abettor, patron, and defender of the same. And that he sent the Lollards to preach about in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford, without any licence from the ordinaries or diocesans of the places, contrary to the synodical constitution made for that purpose; and that he was present at the wicked preachings of the same, and silenced all opposers he met with, with threatenings and terrors, and the power of the secular sword; asserting and affirming, among other things, that we, and our brethren the suffragans of our province, never had nor have authority to make any constitution of this kind. And, concerning the sacraments of the altar and penance, pilgrimages, adoration of images, and the power of the keys, he has believed, and does believe, and dogmatizes and teaches, otherwise than the Roman and universal church holds and affirms. Wherefore, the said prelates and clergy then besought us that we would be pleased to proceed against the said Sir John Oldcastle, for and upon the premises. But, in reverence to our lord the king, (with whom the said Sir John was a great favourite,) and as much out of respect to the order of knighthood, with all our brethren and suffragans of our said province, and a great part of the clergy of our said province, we waited on our said lord the king at his palace at Kennington; and, making complaint against the

said Sir John, we, in some measure, represented the errors of the said Sir John.

“ But, at the instance of our lord the king, and our own desire to reduce the said Sir John to the unity of the church, without bringing him to open shame, we deferred for a long time all execution of the premises. But, forasmuch as we had it from the king’s own mouth, and under his hand, that all his pains to reclaim this man had proved vain and ineffectual, we thereupon decreed to summon the said Sir John to appear before us at a certain time now past, to answer for and concerning the premises; and we sent our officer with these our citations to the said Sir John, then dwelling at his castle of Cowling.

“ To which our officer we gave in command, that he should not in anywise enter the castle of the said Sir John without leave; but, by the mediation of one John Buttler, door-keeper to the privy-chamber of our lord the king, he should apply to Sir John himself for his leave to enter his castle, in order to give him a citation; or at least that he would appear without the castle, and suffer the citation to be served upon him. But Sir John publicly answered the said John Buttler, though in the premises he had made use of the king’s name, that he would by no means be cited, nor suffer any manner of way such citation to be served upon

him. Upon this faithful account given us, that it was impossible to serve the said Sir John personally with a citation; and we, being fully persuaded thereof, decreed that he should be cited by an edict, which should be publicly fixed on the great doors of the cathedral church in Rochester, which is but three English miles from his said castle of Cowling. Accordingly, we caused him to be cited, and our edict to be fixed in public and open view on the great doors of the said church, charging him to appear before us on the second day of September now past, personally to answer to and for the premises, and other allegations of heretical pravity against him. On the day appointed, we held a court in the great chapel in our castle of Leeds, in our diocese, in which we then lived and resided with our court; and after the necessary proof of the premises, and we had heard and received the relation, as it is commonly reported in the parts where the said Sir John immures and fortifies himself in his said castle, and defends his opinions by contemning the keys of the church, and impugning the archiepiscopal authority,—

“ We caused proclamation, aloud and in open court, to be made for the said Sir John to appear; and after proclamation made, and we had long waited, and he not appearing, we justly pronounced

him, as he was, contumacious, and then and there returned him excommunicated, in punishment for so high a contumacy. And because, from the series of the premises, and other plain demonstrations and evidences of fact, we apprehend that the said Sir John strengthens and fortifies himself, in defence of his errors, against the authority of the church, as is premised, (which gives great handle to suspect him of heresy and schism,) we decreed against the said Sir John that he should be a second time cited personally, if he could be found; if not, by edict, as before, to appear before us on the Saturday next after the feast of the apostle and evangelist St. Matthew next ensuing, to show, if he has reasonable cause, why he ought not to be proceeded against as a public heretic, schismatic, and an enemy of the Catholic Church, and why he ought not to be adjudged as such, and the assistance of the secular arm be solemnly called for against him; personally to propound, and further to answer, do, and receive, concerning all and singular the premises, what in justice is meet. At which time (namely, the Saturday next after the feast of St. Matthew, being the 23rd of September, as we held our court in the chapter-house of St. Paul's in London, with our brethren, Richard Lord Bishop of London, and Henry of Winchester, in sessions with us, Sir Robert Morley, Knight and

Lieutenant of the Tower of London, appeared in court with the said Sir John Oldcastle, Knight, and delivered him to us :

“ For he had been arrested a little before by the king’s order, and confined to the Tower. To the said Sir John Oldcastle, thus personally appearing, we repeated, in soft and moderate terms, and in a manner very courteous and obliging, all our proceedings against him, as they stand upon the journal of the former day ; namely, How he, the said Sir John, stood presented and charged by and upon the articles above mentioned, in convocation of the prelates and clergy of our said province. And how he had been cited, and excommunicated for his contumacy. And though by his default it was come to this, we notwithstanding showed ourselves ready and willing to absolve him. But he, the said Sir John, taking no notice of this our overture, answered, he would gladly make profession, before us and my said brethren, of the faith which he believed and maintained. For which we giving leave, as he desired, he drew out of his bosom an indented writing, and there openly read the contents of it, and afterwards with his own hand presented to us the said writing, touching the articles whereof he was accused ; of which this is the copy :

“ ‘ I, John Oldcastle, Knight and Lord Cob-

ham, desire it may be known to all Christians, and I call God to witness, that I never have entertained, and, by the help of God, never will entertain, any persuasion which is not consistent with a firm and undoubting belief of all the sacraments which were ordained and appointed by Christ himself for the use of his church. Moreover, that my faith, as to the four points alleged against me, might be more clearly understood, I declare, first of all, that I believe, that, in the adorable sacrament of the altar, the very body of Christ does exist, under the species of bread: the same body, I mean, that was born of his mother, Mary; that was crucified for us, that died and was buried, and rose again the third day from the dead, and was exalted to the right hand of his Eternal Father, where he now sits partaker with Him in glory. Then for the sacrament of penance, I believe it is chiefly necessary for all that desire to be saved to amend their wicked lives, and undergo such a penance for the sinful part of them, as, by a true confession, an undissembled contrition, and lawful satisfaction, manifests itself to be agreeable to the holy scriptures, without which none can hope for salvation. Thirdly, with respect to images, I hold that they are no ingredient in the Christian belief, but, long after the publication of the faith of Christ, were introduced into the world, by the permission

of the church, to be as a calendar to the laity and the ignorant, that, by visible representation of the sufferings of Christ, and of the pious lives and martyrdoms of the saints, the remembrance of those things might the more easily be impressed on their minds; but if one so abuses this representation as to give that worship to these images of the saints which is due to the saints themselves, or rather to him to whom the saints themselves owe all honour and adoration, and putteth his confidence in them, which is only to be placed in God, or is so affected towards these senseless images as to be more devoted to them than God, in my opinion he is guilty of idolatry, and wickedly sins against God, the only object of worship. Lastly, I am fully persuaded that there is no abiding-place upon earth, but that we are all pilgrims, either on the way to happiness, or tending to misery: he that either knows not, or will not be instructed in, nor live in the practice of, the commandments of God, it is in vain for him to expect salvation, though he went on pilgrimage into all quarters of the world; and, on the other side, he that lives in obedience to the holy commandments of God will undoubtedly be saved, though he never went a step on pilgrimage in his life, either to Rome, or Canterbury, or Compostell, or to any other places.'

“ Sir John having thus read his writing, we,

with our brethren the bishops above mentioned, and divers other doctors and learned men, held a consultation about the contents of it; and, by the advice and agreement of the same, we thus applied to the said Sir John Oldcastle, at the same time and place:—‘Look you, Sir John! In this writing of yours, it must be confessed, there are contained many good things, and right Catholic; but this day was appointed you to answer to other points, which savour of error and heresy, which your declaration has not fully answered; and, therefore, you ought to explain yourself more clearly as to those points, and more particularly declare your faith and assertions expressed in the said writing, viz.—Whether you hold, believe, and affirm, that in the sacrament of the altar, after consecration by the priest, there remaineth material bread or not? * Also, whether you hold, believe, and affirm, that, in the sacrament of penance, it is necessary, where a priest can be had, to confess your sins to the priest ordained by the church?’ To which state of the question, amongst many other things said by the said Sir John, he answered, expressly,—That he would not declare himself otherwise, nor return any other answer, than in his said writing. Upon this we replied to the said Sir John, with much patience, and in a courteous and affectionate manner:—‘Sir John, it behoves you to consider well

of this matter, because, if you do not return a clear answer to the articles exhibited against you within the time assigned by the judge, we may proceed to pronounce and declare you an heretic.' But Sir John would abide by his former answer, and afford us no other.

“ We therefore advised with our brethren the bishops above mentioned, and others of our council, and, by their advice, we declared to the said Sir John Oldcastle, what the holy Roman Church, following the doctrines of St. Austin, St. Jerome, and St. Ambrose, and other fathers, in these points, had determined, which determinations all Catholics were obliged to submit to. To which the said Sir John gave for answer,—‘ That he would readily assent to and observe the determinations and decisions of Holy Church, and all that God required him to believe and observe; but that our lord the Pope, the cardinals, the archbishops, and bishops, and other prelates of the church, had power to determine such things, he would by no means affirm.’ We, still patiently bearing with him, in hopes he might be better informed by mature deliberation, promised the said Sir John that certain determinations, relating to the points above mentioned, and to which he ought to give a clearer answer, should be translated from the Latin into English, that he might the more easily understand them, and they

be published for his use. And we commended and affectionately entreated him to prepare and deliver in a full and clear answer to the same on Monday next following.

“ And we caused these determinations to be translated the same day, and to be delivered into his own hands the next Sunday; the tenor of which determination is as follows:—‘ The faith and determination of the holy Catholic Church, concerning the sacrament of the altar, is this,— That, after consecration by a priest at mass, the substance of the bread is changed into the material body of Christ, and the substance of the wine into the material blood of Christ; therefore, after consecration, there remaineth not any of the substance of bread and wine, which were in both before it. What answer do you give to this article? Also, Holy Church hath determined, that it is the duty of every Christian living in the world to confess his sins to a priest ordained by the church, if he has the opportunity of such an one. What are your sentiments of this article? Christ ordained St. Peter to be his vicar on earth, whose see is the Church of Rome; and that all the successors of Peter, who are now called the Popes of Rome, should succeed in the same power and authority with which Christ invested him; by whose special power are constituted and ordained prelates in par-

ticular churches, as archbishops, bishops, curates, and the rest of the ecclesiastical order; to which all Christians owe obedience, according to the traditions of the Roman Church. This is the determination of Holy Church; and what is your opinion of this article? Besides these, the holy church hath ordained, that it is the indispensible duty of every Christian man to go on pilgrimage to holy places, and there to adore the sacred relics of the apostles, martyrs, and confessors, and of all the saints in the calendar of the Roman Church. How do you hold this article?’

“ On Monday, the 25th of the said month of September, we assembled, with our brethren the bishops above mentioned, with the addition, by our order and command, of our venerable brother Benedict, by the grace of God Bishop of Bangor; and our counsellors and officers, namely, Mr. Henry Ware, official of Canterbury; Philip Morgan, doctor of both laws; Howel Kyffen, John Kemp, and William Carleton, doctors of the canon law; and John Witnam, Thomas Palmer, Robert Wombervel, John Withead, Robert Chamberlain, Richard Doddington, and Thomas Walden, doctors in divinity; also James Cole and John Stevens, our notaries, both called to assist, and take the examinations, in the trial, were all and every of them sworn upon the holy evangelists, as they

would answer it to God and the world, faithfully to discharge their duty that day, in the matter and cause above mentioned.

“ After this, Robert Morley, Knight and Lieutenant of the Tower of London, brought Sir John Oldcastle into court, and set him before us, to whom we affably and courteously repeated the proceedings of the former day, and, as before, told him how he had been, and still stood, excommunicated; and we entreated and besought him to desire and accept of absolution, in the usual form of the church. To which Sir John then answered in these words:—‘ That he desired no absolution from us, but only from God.’ Upon this, we prayed the said Sir John, with an air of kindness and concern, to give his full answer to the articles exhibited against him. And first we demanded what he had to say about the sacrament of the Eucharist? To which article, among other things, he answered and said,—‘ That, as Christ, when he lived upon earth, had the divine and human nature united together in him, and the divine was veiled and covered under the human, and only the human visible and outward; so, in the sacrament of the altar, there is the very body of Christ, and real bread too: the bread is the thing we see with our eyes; and the body of Christ, which is hidden under it, we do not see.’ And the faith about this

sacrament of the altar, expressed in the writing which we sent to him, as determined by the holy Roman Church and the fathers, he expressly denied to be the determination of the church; or, if it was the determination of the church, he asserted such determination to be made contrary to the holy scriptures, and after the church was aggrandized and corrupted, and not before.

“ To the articles about penance and confession, he answered in these words:—‘ That if any one is so entangled in the snares of sin, that he knows not how to extricate himself, it is advisable and expedient for him to apply to some pious and discreet minister for ghostly counsel; but that he should confess his sin to his own or any other priest, though he had ever so good an opportunity, is not at all necessary to salvation, because such a sin can be forgiven only upon contrition, and on that alone can the sinner be cleared.’ Concerning the adoration of the holy cross, he then declared and asserted,—‘ That the body of Christ, which hung upon the cross, ought only to be worshipped, because that body was and is the only adorable cross.’ And, being asked what honour he allowed to the image of the cross, he answered in these express words:—‘ That to keep it clean, and in his closet, was the only honour he vouchsafed it.’ As to the power of the keys, our lord the Pope, arch-

bishops, bishops, and other prelates, he said,—‘The Pope and we together made up the true Antichrist: the Pope was the head; the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, the body and limbs; and the friars the tail of Antichrist: to which Pope, archbishops, and prelates, there was no obedience due, any further than they imitated Christ, and Peter, in their lives, manners, and conversation; and that he is the successor of Peter who follows him in the purity of his life and conversation, and no other.’

“The said Sir John added, addressing himself, with a loud voice and extended hands, to the people who were present,—‘Those who sit in judgment upon me, and are desirous to condemn me, will seduce you all, and themselves, and lead ye to hell; take therefore good heed of them.’ Upon his saying this, we applied to the said Sir John, and besought him, with tears in our eyes, and exhorted him in the most compassionate manner we could, to return to the unity of the church, to believe and embrace the faith and doctrine of Holy Church. To which he returned this peremptory answer:—‘That he would not believe nor maintain otherwise than he had before declared.’

“Seeing, therefore, he was so hardened in his errors, that we had no hopes of working on him to renounce them, we proceeded, with regret and

bitterness of heart, to pronounce the following definitive sentence.”

EXPENSES OF THE CROWN.

“The Commons gave King Richard a broad hint on the subject of his own extravagance.” (Vol. i. p. 104.) How this subject was dealt with in the reigns of Richard the Second and Henry the Fourth, by the Commons of England, will be seen from what follows:—

“The Commons pray that all kind of gifts whatsoever, made by King Edward the Third, may be examined; if worthily bestowed to be confirmed, if otherwise to be revoked:—‘Item ils prient, pur ceo que la Corone est moult abaisse & demembre pardivers donns donez en temps de notre Seignour que Dieux assoille, & queux donns il estroit malement deceux & en plusieurs personnes malement emploeis, come home le poet declarer, a grand damage de lui, & de notre Seigneur la Roy q’ore est, si bien des chasteaux, villes, terres, tenements, baillez, gardes, mariages, eschetes, & releves, aussi bien en Gascoigne, Irlande, come en Engleterre, qe plese a notre Seigneur le Roy, & son Conseil faire examiner par les rolles de Chancellerie, du temps notre Seigneur le Roi, qi Dieux assoille, queux donnees, & a queux, & quelle somme ils amontent qi aviendront, a trop haut somme sans

doute, & que sur ceo ils soient sagement examinez, asqueux ils estoient donez notablement & profitablement, pur le Roi & le roialme, & es queux notre dit Seigneur estoit deceux, & ses donns malement employez, & queux tous ceux asqueux notre dit Seigneur estoit deceux & qui sont malement employez, y puissent estre de tout repellez, sanz estre redonez as memes ceux, ou a nul autre, tanqe ses dettes soient acquites & lestat de nos tres honoures Seigneurs les fitz de notre Seigneur qui Dieux assoile, qui sont poures a leur estat, y purra avenamment per ascuns des ditz donns ette relevez, & soit le perneur quensy ad notre dit Seigneur deceux punis en cest present Parlement, selonc son desert par agarde de Barronage, en supportation du charge que le commune people y convient porter: ratifiantz & confirmantz a ceux qui ont deserve, les donns en manere come notre dit Seigneur, qui Dieux assoile, leur avoit grantez considerant a chescun son longe service, & son desert, & regardant sil please a nostre Seigneur, as tous ceux que servirent a nostre dit Seigneur, son aiel, que sont sans rewarde pur leur service.'

“ *Resp.* ‘Les Signeurs de continuel Conseil seront chargez de veer & examiner les ditz donns, & les conditions estates & deserts des personnes & en ultre fair ce que reson demande.’

“ *Anno 3 Richard II.* The Speaker says, If the

king were reasonably governed in his expenses, within and without the realm, he should have little need to charge his Commons, who were already much impoverished:—‘Dist qe lour sembloit a la dite Commune, qe si lour Seigneur lige eust este bien & raisonablement governez en ses despenses par dedeins le royaume, & autrement, il neust ore besoigne de leur aide, per chargeant sa dite Commune, quore est trop poure,’ &c.

“*Anno 5 Richard II.* The king says, He will make no grant without the assent of the Lords of his Council, till he shall be out of debt:—‘*Item,* prient les Communes, qil plese au Roy notre Seigneur, qil puisse au present estre escript en rolle de Parlement, coment ordenez est, per lui, nos autres Seigneurs, & toute la Commune, qe de desore en aprez, nul donn de terre, de rente, de garde, ne de mariage, ne de nul manere eschete soit grantez a nulluy, tanqe le Roy notre dit Seigneur soit hors de dette, & hors des tielx charges de guerre, come y ad au present, & si aucune persone demande aucune donn au contraiere de cette petition perde les service & compagnie notre dit Seigneur pur toujours apres.’

“*Resp.* ‘Il ne semble mye honest ne chose honourable au Roy, ne a sa dignitee, qil se lieroit a telle guise peront il ent fuist si oultrement constreint, mais plest au Roy & il voet par le bien de

luy mesmes & de son roialme, soy restreindre, & abstenir a doner ou granter a aucune persone, terre, rente, garde, mariage, ou eschete, sans lassent & accord des Seigneurs & autres de son Conseil.’

“ *Anno 6 Richard II.* The Commons among other things pray, That the king will appoint good orders about his person, so as he may live within his revenues, and that all profits and gifts may be employed upon the wars, to the ease of the Commons :—‘ Come autrement ordeigner, qe bone governail soit mys entour votre honourable persone, si qe vous purres honestement & roialment viver, deinz les revenues de votre roialme, & qe toutes maneres des gardes, mariages, releifs, eschetes, forfaitures, & toutes autres commoditees, puissent estre gardes pur vos guerres, & en defens de votre roialme, & nul part aillours donez en supportation & aide de vos poures Communes & grant honour & profit a vous.’

“ *Resp.* ‘ Le Roy est de bone voluntee & le desire moelt entirement de fair & ordonner en ce cas per lavis des Seigneurs de son roialme ce qe luy semblera mieulx affaire pur son honour & profit.’

“ *Anno 9 Richard II.* it was enacted, That all the revenues, as well in the Exchequer as elsewhere, should be laid up for one whole year, without any diminution thereof by gift :—‘ *Item.* Qe

ordein soit en especial que tous les revenues nostre Seigneur le Roy, si bien en l'Eschequer, comme aillours, soient sauvement gardez per un an entier sans estre donez a nully per nul grant, en supportation de nostre Seigneur le Roy, & de son people que plesse a nostre Seigneur le Roy de charger & commander les Seigneurs du Conseil, & ses officiers en plein Parlement, que rien ne soit fait au contraire.'

“ *Resp.* ‘ Le Roy le voet.’

“ *Anno 11 Richard II.* The Commons pray That no hereditaments, or other profits, then escheated to the king, be granted to any during the wars, and that no person presume to crave any of the same:—‘ *Item.* Prient les Communes, que toutes maneres de seignouries, terres, tenements, rents, services, biens, possessions & chateaux queconques, forfaits a nostre Seigneur le Roy, per cause des jugemens rendus devers les personnes adjugez en cest present Parlement, & auxint toutes autres terres, tenements, eschetes, forfetures, gardes, mariages, & autres profits queconques queux sont, ou deviendront en la meins du Roy per queconque cause demoergent entirement en la main du Roy nostre Seigneur durant les guerres, pur acquiter ses dettez & en eide de maintenir son estat & ensemment en ease & supportation de ses pauvres communes du roialme nient contrestant aucun grant ou gar-

rant fait a ascunnys avant cestheures & que nul homme greindre ne meindre, en l'hostiel du Roy, ne entour la persone du Roy ne autre queconqe, de quel estat ou condition quil soit, en privee, nen appert, soit sy hardy a demander ou preinder de donn nostre Seigneur le Roy, ascuns des seignouries, terres, tenements, rents, services, biens, possessions, eschetes, forfeitures, gardes, mariages, chateaux, ou profits susdits, ou autres profits, ou revenues queconques, durant les guerres, come dessus, sur peine de forfaire le double devers nostre Seigneur le Roy, & repelle de mesme la chose issint demandez, & estre reint & imprisonnes a la volonte du Roy. Purvus toutes voys, que si ascun home eit terres tenements ou possessions du grant nostre Seigneur le Roy, ou dascuns de ses progeniturs, queux furent parcelles de la Corone, que per bon trette enter le Conseil du Roy & les possesseurs des tieux terres & tenements, mesmes les terres tenements & possessions poient estre rejoins a la dite Corone, a profit du Roy, grantants autres terres tenements ou possessions de les forfeitures ayant ditz en eschange pur les terres tenements & possessions de la Corone susdite, & sy les Seigneurs ou autres qi ont terres ou tenements de la corone, come dessus, ne voellent volontairement a ce assentir, ne accorder, qils eint & enjoient leurs terres & tenements de la Corone avant ditz come ils ont eu a

devant, & qe les grants officiers du royalme par avis des Seigneurs du Conseil, eient poer de vendre parcelles deles dites forfeitures per leur bone discretion, & qe le grant sur tiel vendue soit ferme & estable.’

“ *Resp.* ‘ Le Roy le voet, forpris d’offices & baillis, & ce qil a donne en cest present Parlement, issint, qendroit de forfeitures adjuges en cest Parlement, si ascun pretend davoir droit ou interest en icelles, sue au Conseil, sil luy semble affaire, & droit luy sera fait.’

The misgovernment of this prince, not only in his revenues, but in all the duties of his high office, with his profusion and partiality to his favourites, made way for a very great revolution, and drew on so much hatred of the people, as at last all his subjects withdrew their allegiance from him, and chose another, King Henry the Fourth, his cousin german.

“ *Anno 1 Henry IV.* The Commons pray That the lands, parcel of the Crown revenue, granted away by Edward the Third and Richard the Second, may be resumed:—‘ *Item.* Touchant terres, tenements, & rents, ou autres possessions, queconques, qe furent parcelle de la Corone, ou des Seignouries de la Corone, en temps Seigneur Edward le Tierce, Roy Dengleterre, ou en temps Richard, darrein Roy Dengleterre, nient donez per

assent du Parlement, ne en eschange pour autres terres, ore demurantz a la Corone, qe toutz y ceux soient rejoinz arere a la Corone; purveu toutefoitz, que si ascun Seigneur de lestate chivaler, ou esquire pur son travaille duement deservy, eit pur terme de sa vie, & nient autrement, qil ne soit rebote dicelx, devant qil soit autrement guerdonez & semblablements seit feat dela principalte de Galles, de Cornwailee, & de Cestre, & reservez tout foits, as citeins & burgeys, parmy tout le royalme, leur libertees & franchises, & a leur heirs & successors.'

"*Resp.* 'Le Roy sadviesera, & par bone advys & discretion ent fera due remedie.'

"*Anno 5 Henry IV.* The Commons pray That the king would provide for the repairing of his castles and houses, and, namely, for his castle at Windsor, which was greatly in decay, and not to grant away the profits of those castles and houses, and notwithstanding to stand to the repair of the same, without which he could not but run to the great charging of the commons:—' Et auxint les dicts communes monstrerent, coment les chastellx & autres manoirs du Roy sont molt ruineuses, & embusoignant de grand repris, & reparation, & coment les profits dicelles sont donez as diverses persones, & le Roy supporte les charges, come per especial, le chastel de Windesore, a el

feust assignee certain commoditie, pur la reparation dicelle, & ore mesme la commoditie est donnee as certaines personnes, & le Roy supporte les charges & auxint es autres places, les gentz preignent les profits de herbage, & del vert, deins diverses ses parkes, & bois, & le Roy supporte les charges de le enclosure dicell, & pur cestes importunes charges, & plusieurs autres, & pur les plusieurs donns des chastellx, terres, & seignouries, & des annuites, faits & donez nient duement, ne descreteinment, & par especial pur les grandes charges & depenses de le hostel du Roy, & pur amendement des tielx meschiefs faire, & pur ouster tielk inconveniences en apres, en supportation del commune people, lès Communes prient au Roy moelt entierment, & cordialement, qe considerez les perils imminentes, de toutz parts per ses ennemys, & rebelx, comes yont novelx de jour en autre, & coment le cas est tiel, qe si tielx meschiefs ne soient graceusement remediez, & refourmez en cest Parlement y purroit estre qe sur soudeins novelx de arrival des ennemys, ou per autre voix, mesme cest Parlement de necessite seroit de tout departiz, & dissolvez, & jamais les Seignours ni les Communes se re-assembleroient, pur remedee ne redresse faire, sur les meschiefs susdits, & autres qe Dieux defende.

“ It appears, by the purport of this petition,

That there were certain lands and rents set aside, or assigned, for the repair of Windsor Castle, that ancient seat of our kings, and sacred to the honours and ceremonies of the Garter, and therefore particularly provided for with a revenue, by the wisdom of our forefathers ; yet it seems these lands, so annexed to Windsor, were at that time granted away to some great man, or craving courtier : but this the House of Commons did not then think reasonable.

“ And the remonstrance thereon made was kindly taken by the king ; for he answered the petition in person from the throne :—‘ Et sur ceo mesme nostre Seignour le Roy moelt gracieusement de son bouche propre, en plein Parlement, chargea & commenda si bien tous les ditz Seignours, come les ditz Communes, qils faiorient lour diligence & luy montreroient leurs bons & seins conseilx, celle partie, pur aide de luy, & de tout son roialme.

“ ‘ Et puis apres les dits Communes en mesme le Parlement firent requeste as ditz Seignours, qe come le Roy lour avoit donne tiel charge, & mandement, & ceo en si haute Court de Record, qils fairoient lour diligence bien & loyalment sans curiosie faire entre eux, en ascune manere, come ils voloient respondere devant lue Dieux tout puissant, & devant nostre dit Seignour le Roy, & a tout le roialme en temps avenir, & qe de sur ceo mesme

les Communes ent fairoient semblablement de leur partie, & disoient outre mesme les Communes, a nostre dit Seignour le Roy, qe cestes matiers ensi faits, & accomplez en cest Parlement, il leur trove-roit foialx & naturelx liges devers luy de parfaire son plaisir, & voloir a leur poiar par le aide de Dieux.'

“ It is probable this seasonable care of the House of Commons rescued, for that time, the lands belonging to Windsor Castle, for from that time these lands continued in the demesnes of the Crown till very lately.

“ And some years after, viz. *anno* 31 *Henry* VIII., there passed an Act of Parliament expressly to annex several manors by name to the castle and honour of Windsor, not to be alienated from it; so careful were our ancestors that this noble and ancient seat of our kings should have some revenue to keep the house and parks in good repair.

“ In the same year of Henry the Fourth, the Commons rehearsing how King Edward the Third, in the parliament holden in the 11th of his reign, created his eldest son Duke of Cornwall, and the same dukedom annexed to the Crown, with divers hereditaments, by his letters patents, by authority of the same never to be dismembered, or sold away. They therefore pray the king to re-

sume and seize, and so to unite again to the said duchy, such lands as were sold away by Prince Edward, King Richard, or by the king himself:—
 ‘ Non obstantz incorporation ou union de quel duchee per une haute autorite ensi parfaite, puis encea est demembrez, si bien per diverses alienations faitz per le avant dit Edward nadgaires prince, come per le darreine Roy Richard, qe fuist, & per vous.

“ ‘ Qe pleise a vous de vostre haute discretion, ove le avis de tous Seignours esprituelx & temporelx, en cest present Parlement assemblez, considerantz la union dudit duchee, en la manere avant-dite, fait de requiler tout ceo, qe dedit duchee est demembrez, & per autorite de Parlement de reseiser & rejoindre a dit duchee, come il fust a devant non obstant ascune alienation.

“ ‘ Qele petition lue & entendue fuist respondus en les parolles quensuent.

“ ‘ Accordez est per le Roy, & les Seignours en Parlement, qe le dit Mounseignour le Prince, per lavys de son Conseil, eit briefs de *Scir. fac.* Ou autre recoverer le mieltz qil avoir purra, par les estatutes & leys du roialme, solonc ceo qe le cas requiert,’ &c. Wherein shall be allowed no protection or praying in aid of the king, unless it be for Sir John Cornwale, and Eliz. his wife, late wife of John Holland Earl of Huntington, and for such

persons to whom the king is bound by warranty :—
‘Sinon en cas qe le Roy soit expressement tenuz a
la grantie,’ &c.”—*Discourse upon Grants and
Resumptions, published in 1700.*

THE END.



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